

DISCLAIMER:

This is a work of fiction. Any resemblance to actual people, places or events is purely coincidental.

SYNOPSIS:

Set in a converted cotton mill on Saddleworth Moor, "*Samaritus*" is a self funding refuge for the homeless. The *Samaritus Community* accepts furniture donations, and resells these goods back to the general public in its mill shop. The workforce consists of formerly homeless individuals who live and work in the Samaritus community. In exchange for bed & board and a nominal weekly allowance each *Companion*, as the workers are known, gets his own room with *en suite* bathroom facilities. Provided Companions work 40 hours a week in the community, the rest of their time is their own. However, Samaritus does have certain rules which must be followed if Companions wish to remain in the community. Violent behaviour or thievery result in immediate expulsion. In addition, Samaritus has a zero tolerance policy towards alcohol and drug consumption on its premises. But most important of all, Companions must treat each other with the utmost respect at all times.

Aside from the Companions the community employs a small management team who oversee financial and budgeting matters, and attempt to facilitate the smooth running of the community. Samaritus also hires a full time van driver; the recently appointed and idealistic, Noel. The community's lofty aim is to challenge conventional indifference to poverty, and uphold the principles enshrined in The Declaration of Human Rights. Samaritus is a well intentioned experiment in communal living. But, who is actually running the community? The sometimes philanthropic management team, or the street wise Companions? This dark comedy explores issues relating to the oppositions of individualism-community, idealism- cynicism, honesty-dishonesty, and the sheer bloody mindedness of some people when faced with a proposed change to their daily routine. However, the main focus centres on the human spirit's ability to overcome adverse experience and even transitory madness. Moral enlightenment is possible for the least fortunate of individuals, and any person can decide to live a virtuous life. Beggars *can* be choosers.

CAST (in order of appearance):

NOEL - Samaritus Employee (Van Driver)

MICK BAIRSTOW - Companion (Warehouse)

LEN - Samaritus Manager

SAUL - Companion (Furniture Shop)

MARLEY - Companion (Van Crew)

SAMIR - Companion (Bric-a-Brac Sort)

PORNO PETE - Companion (Former Van Driver)

BIG DREW - Companion (Van Crew)

JOELLA -Samaritus Retail Manager

SHEILA - Len's Secretary

THE PROFESSOR - Companion (General)

NIALL - Companion (Mancunian juvenile delinquent)

ZAC KERESH - Technical College Lecturer

NIGEL - BBC Camera Man

EXT. A three story converted cotton mill is situated on top of the Saddleworth Moors, silhouetted against a slate grey sky. Next to the mill is a large warehouse. Parked next to the entrance to the warehouse is a large white box van with the logo "SAMARITUS" etched on the side of the van. A man is loading furniture into the van with aid of a sack barrow. A car approaches the mill and warehouse. The car parks next to the van and a man gets out of the car. He approaches the other man who is loading the van.

SUPERIMPOSE CAPTION. "SAMARITUS is a self funding charity. It is run by formerly homeless men".

NOEL (car driver): Hi, I'm looking for Len, the Manager.

MICK (van loader): Why? Are you the police?

NOEL: Ha. No, I'm here to see Len about the van driver's job.

MICK: Well, I hope you are better than the last twat we had.

Pause.

NOEL: Really, was he *that* bad?

MICK: Outsiders are all twats. No offence mate, but I wish Len and his management cronies would just let the *Companions* get on with running this place without any unwanted outside interference.

NOEL: Well, I *am* an outsider.

MICK: Look pal, *Porno Pete* is the best van driver and he's one of the Companions. If you take my advice you should cut your losses and piss off while the going's good. No offence mate, like I said.

NOEL: No offence taken and thanks for the *advice*, but I *do* have an appointment with Len this morning so I think I should see him, out of common courtesy, don't you?

MICK: You sound like a college boy. *The Professor* will love you, if you are around that is.

NOEL: *The Professor*?

MICK: Yeah, he's one of the Companions. A college boy like you. He went to Italy on some poncey holiday but should be back tomorrow.

NOEL: I'm sure I'll be getting to know all the Companions. I've *actually* accepted the job of van driver. Len is just going to show me round today. Anyway, your name is?

MICK: Mick Bairstow, Yorkshire born and bred. Mr Bairstow to you.

NOEL: Okay Mick. Nice to meet you. Could you tell me where Len's office is?

MICK: You'll find him in the main building over there. I'd knock on the door before entering his office just in case he's glugging down the whisky.

NOEL: Thanks Mick.

INT. The Reception Area in the ground floor of the main building. A sign on a door reads "MANAGER". Noel knocks on the door. A muffled entreaty to "enter" can be heard from within the office. Noel enters the office.

INT. The Manager's Office. A ruddy faced middle aged man rises from his chair to cross the space and shake hands with Noel.

LEN: Come in Noel. I've been expecting you. You found us okay then?

NOEL: Yes. Samaritus is well sign posted and one of the Companions directed me here from the car park.

LEN: Mick?

NOEL: Yes. Mick Bairstow, Yorkshire born and bred.

LEN: Ha, ha. How did you find him?

NOEL: Direct and plain speaking.

LEN: Now that's an understatement. Mick has been a Companion here for 10 years. He's a bit set in his ways.

NOEL: So you can stay here as a Companion indefinitely?

LEN: Provided Companions follow the rules they can stay here as long as they like. Mick Bairstow is one of the "Lifers", though he has been barred for a month at a time on a couple of occasions.... for drinking in his room.

NOEL: I see. Are there many *Lifers* here at Samaritus?

LEN: Quite a few. You'll get to meet some of them when I show you round the building and the yard.

Pause.

LEN (Cont'd): How much do you know about Samaritus?

NOEL: Well it's a self funding charity.

LEN: Can I just stop you there. We don't use the word *charity* any more. Samaritus is a social enterprise. Please continue.

NOEL: Samaritus is a self funding *social enterprise* that collects furniture from donators and resells these goods to the public. The workers or companions are former homeless men, who receive bed and board and a small allowance in exchange for their labours.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Yes, the companions have to put in a 40 hour working week, and we also claim Housing Benefit on their behalves, which contributes to the running of this place.

NOEL: Is Samaritus a going concern?

LEN: Samaritus turned over £300,000 in revenue last year and made a substantial profit, though I don't know the exact figure.

Pause.

LEN (CONT'D): We also sell bric-a-brac, books, clothes, electrical goods which are tested in our workshop, and have a cafe which opens Monday to Friday.

NOEL: Impressive.

LEN: We like to think so, and I suppose it's one of the benefits of being an established community with such a skilled workforce.

NOEL: So when do I start?

LEN: What about tomorrow morning at 8-45am? That's when we have our communal meetings before the start of the working day. We assemble in the cafe area which I will show you shortly.

NOEL: Great.

LEN: Do you have any questions regarding the job?

NOEL: Not really. I will be driving the van and in charge of deliveries and the collections of furniture?

LEN: Correct. The secret is to know the area, and what to, and not to, pick up from the public. We are very strict on furniture having fire labels and donated goods being of sufficient quality that they can be resold. The vans have satellite navigation and your van crew will have intimate knowledge of the local area. You'll be fine.

NOEL: Who will be working with me on the van?

LEN: That varies. We like to move the Companions around from job to job, but you will probably have *Marley* and *Big Drew* with you tomorrow.

NOEL: *Marley* and *Big Drew*? They sound like characters.

LEN: Oh, they are characters alright.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Any last minute reservations about the job? You have met Mick Bairstow, when all is said and done.

NOEL: No. I'm looking forward to the challenge.

LEN: Excellent. Then without further ado, let the tour of Samaritus begin. I thought we could start off in the main shop where all the furniture is sold to the public.

INT. Len's Office. Len and Noel rise from their chairs and leave Len's Office.

INT. Furniture shop, the size of 2 tennis courts. Sofas, wardrobes, and assembled beds are set out in lines. There is a shop counter in one corner where the cash register is situated. A formidable looking man with white beard and grey hair is stood behind the counter, surveying his domain. *Saul* is a Lifer Companion hailing from Saddleworth, who runs the day to day running of the furniture operation. He takes furniture collection details over the phone, and handles any cash sales in the shop. By his side sits his sidekick, *Marley*, a stumpy 42 year old white man with matted dreadlocks and a big gut. Len and Noel approach the counter.

LEN: Good morning Saul, Marley.

SAUL: To what do we owe this honour.

LEN: Now now Saul. You know that you will always be top of my Christmas Card List.

SAUL: Cut the BS Len.

LEN: You're right, of course. I don't believe in Christmas.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): I'm showing the new van driver round. This is Noel.

SAUL: Noel? You're having a laugh.

Pause.

SAUL (cont'd): What's wrong with Porno Pete? He's the van driver.

LEN: Porno Pete, I mean Pete, was the van driver. The decision to appoint a full time paid driver has been made by me and approved by the Board of Trustees. Noel will be starting tomorrow morning and I thought I'd get you, Marley, to show him the ropes, or should I say hemp?

MARLEY: I don't touch the 'erb now, man. Not since the last time you caught me and barred me from Samaritus for a month.

LEN: Well let's hope that punishment was a salutary lesson.

MARLEY: What? Too many long words for a Monday morning, man.

LEN: Let's hope that you have learned your lesson, Marley. Samaritus has a zero tolerance policy to drugs as you well know.

MARLEY: Yeah, man. Who else is going to be on the van tomorrow?

LEN: I thought *Big Drew*.

SAUL: Big fucking Drew! Now you really are having a laugh. You'll have to tear him away from his new pet rats.

LEN: What? He's not gone and bought rats again has he?

SAUL: Oh yes.

LEN: I told him after we got rid of the last lot that there were to be no more rodents.

SAUL: Well, he's got half a dozen new ones in his room and what are the odds that there is a breeding female amongst them?

LEN: Right, I'll have to deal with Drew and his rodents. Smaritus has a no-pets policy as well, Noel.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd). Jesus. The last time we had to fumigate his room and rip up what was left of the carpets. Jesus.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Anyway, Noel here is our new van driver. I want you to be as helpful as you can be.

INT. Len and Noel move on with their guided tour of the Samaritus building, leaving Saul and Marley sat at the counter. Saul turns to Marley.

SAUL: Oh, I'll be bloody helpful all right. Marley, go and tell Mick that there is to be an emergency meeting at *The Tyre* tonight. We are going to have to come up with a plan of action to get rid of this Noel prick. We have to get Porno Pete back on the van.

MARLEY: No problem, man.

INT. Bric-a-Brac sort area. A room with 2 long tables and a door leading directly out on to the carparking area. A swarthy looking man is sorting bric-a-brac into various wheeled trollies. Len and Noel enter. Len is speaking to Noel.

LEN: And this is our Bric-a-Brac sorting area. When the van arrives with donations, any bric-a-brac comes directly in here and is sorted. Re-salable goods are transferred upstairs to the bric-a-brac shop and anything that cannot be sold is thrown away. This is Samir, another of our long serving Companions.

SAMIR: Good morning my friends. How are you?

NOEL: Very well thank you, Samir.

LEN: Very well also, Samir. This is Noel, our new van driver.

SAMIR: Very good. May your stay here be a happy one.

NOEL: Thank you, Samir.

LEN: Samir is a refugee from the Sudan. How long have you been with us now, Samir?

SAMIR: Five very happy years, Mr Len. After Khartoum, this place is paradise for me but one day I will leave and fly to The United States. I am just waiting for my papers.

LEN: We all have our dreams, Samir.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Where is Porno Pete, I mean Pete? I thought he was on bric-a-brac sort this morning.

SAMIR: He is in his room watching very naughty movies.

LEN: Right. That's another issue that I'm going to have to deal with sooner rather than later.

NOEL: Where does the furniture go when it arrives in the van?

LEN: Good question.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): It either goes into the Warehouse or straight into the shop if it is of exceptional quality and there is space for it on the shop floor.

NOEL: What about electrical goods?

LEN: Another good question. You're certainly on the ball this morning, Noel.

Pause.

LEN (con'td): You'll have to excuse my apparent absent mindedness, Noel, but Porno Pete's, I mean Pete's obsession, and this Drew rat business are suddenly of pressing importance.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): We'll continue the guided tour tomorrow but I need to deal with Pete and Drew immediately. You might as well come with me to the Companion living quarters on the third floor. Pete was your predecessor and Big Drew will be working with you on the van tomorrow, so you need to meet them anyway.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Discipline is an issue in Samaritus. If you give the Companions an inch, invariably they will take a mile. That's why I try and nip potential problems in the bud.

INT. A long corridor, along which are several numbered doors. Len and Noel approach one of the doors. The sound of a female orgasm can be clearly heard from the other side of the door. Len bangs on the door.

LEN: Pete! Open up. Right now.

INT. Shot of Pete's door. Frantic movement and coughing can be heard. After a couple of minutes the door opens. Pete, a seedy looking middle aged man, stands in the doorway. His DVD player has now been switched off.

LEN: What have I told you about watching porno, Pete!

PETE: I wasn't watching porno. It was a nature film.

LEN: Look Pete, don't treat me like an idiot. No more porno. Your internet downloads keep freezing up the internet for the entire building. Even my office computer is getting threatening messages from the FBI.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Anyway, why aren't you on bric-a-brac sort right now?

PETE: Samir wanted to do it. I've only been in my room for 5 minutes, just taking a short break.

LEN: Okay Pete, I haven't got time to argue with you. Just get back to work immediately.

PETE: Okay, Len. Can I just finish this nature film I was watching?

LEN: No. Absolutely not. Get back to work right now.

INT. Porno Pete reluctantly closes his door and walks down the corridor in the direction of the elevator. Len remains in place to see that Porno Pete doesn't double back to his room. Len turns to Noel.

LEN: You see what I have to deal with, Noel?

NOEL: I'm beginning to.

LEN: Oh, you'll soon get the full picture. Now for Big Drew and his bloody rats.

INT. Len and Noel move down the corridor to another room. Len knocks on.

LEN: Come on Drew, I know you are in there.

INT. A shot of Drew's door. Drew, a big hulking figure, opens the door.

LEN: Drew, I need to inspect your room.

DREW: Now?

LEN: Yes, right now.

INT. Len, Noel and Drew enter Drew's room. Half a dozen rats are freely running round the floor.

LEN: Unbelievable!

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): I've told you about this before, Drew. Either the rats go or you go. I want them out of this building today.

DREW: Can't I just keep a couple of them?

LEN: Absolutely not. All gone today. Understand?

DREW: Yes, boss.

LEN: I mean it. I'm serious.

INT. Len and Noel leave Drew's room. Drew immediately resumes playing with his rats.

INT. Len's Office. Len is sat at his desk and Noel is sat in a chair facing him.

LEN: You've seen most of the building, Noel. We skipped the cafe area on the second floor but that's where we have our communal meetings in the morning at 8-45am prompt, so you'll see it tomorrow. Unless you are having second thoughts?

NOEL: No. I'm looking forward to working here.

Pause.

LEN: The Companions also have TV and laundry facilities on level 3 which we skipped but you won't really be going up there. Your domain will be primarily be the furniture shop, warehouse areas, and maintenance and driving of the van.

NOEL: Have I met all of the staff?

LEN: No. Joella is the Retail Manager who oversees all retail aspects of Samaritus. She is away today, trying to organise an art exhibition in Ashton featuring some of the Companions' work. We have some talented *artists* here.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Also, there is Sheila, who is my secretary and responsible for book keeping and general administration; my right hand as it were. She is in town this morning shopping for.... office supplies. You'll see both Joella and Sheila at tomorrow morning's meeting.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): And The Professor is back from Italy tomorrow. He's a Companion who you'll be able to have a decent conversation with. I think he was at Cambridge, or it could have been Oxford. Anyway, he's due back soon and you'll meet him.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Any more questions?

NOEL: No. I don't think so.

LEN: Right. Then I'll see you tomorrow morning. If you could come in at 8-30am, that will give me time to introduce you to the staff before the communal meeting.

INT. Len's Office. Noel leaves the room. Len sits back down at his desk. He pulls open a desk drawer and extracts a bottle of whiskey. Unscrewing the top he takes a long swig.

EXT. Noel gets in his car and drives off down the road; Samaritus in the background and looming large on the top of the moors.

INT. Porno Pete's room. Porno Pete is sweating profusely as he watches a porno film.

INT. Big Drew's room. Big Drew is playing lovingly with his rats on the floor.

INT. Bric-a-Brac Sort area. Samir finds a gold necklace in a handbag and pockets the trinket, kissing it as he does so.

EXT. *The Tyre*. A huge tractor tyre is set in the middle of a field. Samaritus can be seen some half a mile off in the distance. Saul is sat on the tyre with Mick Bairstow and Marley. They are all drinking cheap bottles of cider and passing round a joint.

SAUL: Right lads, this is war. It is vital Pono Pete gets back on the van. Only then can we resume making our own private furniture deliveries. That will be extra ganja for you, Marley, and more cider for you, Mick. You both know what to do, and remember to keep The Professor out of all this. That educated twat is due back anytime.

Pause.

SAUL (cont'd): May the fun and games commence.

Shot fades.

EXT. Noel's car approaches Samaritus the next morning. He parks in front of the mill shop and gets out. Mick, Saul and Marley are stood smoking outside the entrance to the building. They are all watching Noel intently.

NOEL: Morning, lads.

Silence.

EXT. Facade of the mill building. Noel enters.

INT. Len's office. Joella and Sheila are chitchatting. Joella is perched on the edge of Len's desk. Sheila is sat in Len's chair filing her nails. Joella is dressed in an arty, bohemian style. Sheila is a buxom blonde with a lot of cleavage on display. Noel knocks on the door and enters. The two women look round to inspect newcomer, Noel.

NOEL: Oh, hello. I'm Noel, the new van driver. Is Len about?

JOELLA: He'll be in soon. Take a seat. I'm Joella, the Retail Manager.

SHEILA: I hope you last longer than the last van driver, love. He was only here two minutes.

NOEL: I'll try my best.

SHEILA: That might not be good enough, love.

JOELLA: Now now Sheila, let's not paint too black a picture of Samaritus.

Pause.

JOELLA (cont'd): Sheila is Len's secretary.

NOEL: Pleased to meet you both.

INT. Sheila resumes filing her nails. Len enters.

LEN: I see you made it, Noel!

NOEL: I said I'd be here.

LEN: I know. Glad you weren't put off by any of the Companions yesterday.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Did you speak to any of the Lifers on the way into the building?

NOEL: I wished Mick, Saul and Marley a good morning but they ignored me.

LEN: Good. That's good. That means they quite like you.

NOEL: Really?

LEN: Oh yes. Outright abuse is the usual rejoinder to social pleasantries.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): It's almost time for our daily morning meeting. Let's make our way up the cafe area.

INT. Len's office. Len, Noel, Joella and Sheila leave the room.

INT. Cafe area. A circle of chairs is occupied by Companions and staff. Len is the chair of the meeting and is flanked by Noel and Sheila.

LEN: Good morning everybody.

Silence.

LEN (cont'd): I'll read out the work rota shortly and if there are any issues you would like to raise we can discuss those, but first I want to introduce a new member to our team, Noel. Noel is our new van driver.

NOEL: Pleased to meet you all.

Silence.

LEN: Noel will be on the van this morning, and I've designated Marley and The Professor as van crew.

BIG DREW: Why am I not on van crew, Boss?

LEN: You are on kitchen porter duties for the rest of the week, and you know why.

BIG DREW: Because of my rats?

LEN: Exactly. And I hope that you got rid of them.

BIG DREW: Yes, Boss.

MARLEY: I found rat droppings in the tumble drier last night.

BIG DREW: Shut up. That's a lie.

LEN: Anyone else find rat faeces in the laundry room?

Silence.

LEN (cont'd): Are you sure they were rat droppings?

MARLEY: Yeah, man. I know rat shit when I see it.

LEN: Right, I'll be keeping an eye on the laundry room from now on and Marley better not be right.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): So today Samir is on bric-a-brac sort, Pete in the cafe, Saul in the shop, and....where's Niall?

SAUL: He's in bed.

LEN: Jesus. Can somebody go and wake him up?

MICK: I'll go.

INT. Cafe area. Mick leaves the meeting.

MARLEY: Niall was playing his rap music all night.

LEN: That's something else I'll have to talk to him about.

THE PROFESSOR: Perhaps you could mention Niall's lack of punctuality and inconsiderate music playing to his Probation Officer?

LEN: Now now Professor. I will deal with anything relating to the companions' behaviour.

INT. Cafe area. Mick reappears with a sleepy eyed Niall.

LEN: Glad that you could join us, Niall.

SAUL: Afternoon, Niall.

NIALL: Shut up you muppets. I'm here aren't I?

THE PROFESSOR: Oscar Wilde eat your heart out.

NIALL: Wild? Who's wild? I'll show you wild in a minute, panhead.

LEN: Okay that's enough. Niall, I will need to speak to you later.

NIALL: Yeah, whatever. Keep your hair on Grandad.

LEN: I think Joella wants to say something at this point.

JOELLA: Just to say that Ashton Art Gallery have agreed to put on an exhibition of the Samaritus companions' artwork. We already have some excellent drawings and paintings done by you all, but if there is any more art work that you would like to submit to the exhibition then please bring it to my office.

THE PROFESSOR: And the title of the exhibition will be something like, "Tramps have Talent"?

JOELLA: That's a terrible thing to say.

THE PROFESSOR: So what title were you thinking of?

JOELLA: Well, something like "The Art of the Homeless"?

MICK: Like, how to build a shelter out of cardboard?

NIALL: That's well sick, man.

JOELLA: I will think of something tasteful and appropriate.

THE PROFESSOR: As long as it's tasteful, that's all that matters.

JOELLA: I'm sure it will be a great success and the local paper are sending a photographer here to take pictures of all the artists.

MICK: He can take my picture as long as my mugshot doesn't appear on Facebook. I don't want my ex missus tracking me down for child support.

JOELLA: Nobody will be shown on Facebook. You have my guarantee on that one.

LEN: Thank you, Joella.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Any more issues?

MARLEY: Yeah, man. Can Samir stop cooking curry in his room. It's stinking up the corridor.

SAMIR: I do not cook curry in my room! I only drink herbal tea.

MARLEY: Well whatever it is, it stinks.

LEN: Okay that's enough. Come to my room afterwards Samir and I will give you some air fresheners.

LEN(cont'd): Anything else?

THE PROFESSOR: Could people clean the bath after usage? It really is the height of ignorance to leave a black tide mark round the bath rim.

LEN: Yes. Please keep all the communal areas clean. This is your home. Treat it as such.

LEN(cont'd): Which brings me to the final matter I wanted to address this morning. We have had complaints from members of the public, who live locally, that companions have been seen urinating by The Tyre. If you cannot exercise more discretion when drinking off these premises, then we may have to consider a complete ban on alcohol both on and off site. So, think on, and stop pissing in public.

NIAL: Yeah, you sad tramps. Keep your dicks in your smelly old pants you dirty old bastards. You are well sad.

LEN: Thank you Niall, but that's enough.

LEN(cont'd): Any more issues?

Silence.

LEN(cont'd): Okay then. Have a good day out there and let's make some money for the community.

INT. Cafe area. The meeting breaks up and people start to leave the room.

EXT. Carpark area outside Samaritus building. Noel, Marley and The Professor are approaching the van. Saul and Mick Bairstow are stood nearby at the entrance to the warehouse. Noel goes to open the back of the van. Mick calls out to Noel.

MICK: We've loaded the van for you, Noel, seeing as it's your first day. The dockets are on the dashboard and the satellite navigation has been pre-programmed. You are set to go. Marley will help if you do get lost. Won't you, Marley?

MARLEY: Yeah, man.

NOEL: Thanks Mick. That's very helpful of you.

EXT. Samaritus van. Noel, Marley and The Professor get in the cab. The van begins to pull off. As the van pulls away from Samaritus, Niall drops his trousers and bends over, showing his bare buttocks. Noel does a quick doubletake of Niall, swerves the van, but is too shocked for words.

INT. Cabin of the van, a few minutes later. Noel is driving and still shaking his head in disbelief. Marley is seated in the middle of the 3 seats, with The Professor by the passenger window. Noel is looking through the pile of delivery dockets while keeping his eyes on the road.

NOEL: The first delivery is in Dukinfield, 10 Filbert Street. We are delivering a wardrobe?

MARLEY: Yeah, man. The sat nav will take you there. Just listen to the posh lady giving the directions.

INT. Van cabin. Noel, Marley and The Professor are talking.

NOEL: So, Professor, I believe you recently visited Italy?

THE PROFESSOR: Yes. I spent a week in Florence.

MARLEY: Time for bed, Zebedee! Hee hee.

INT. Van cabin. Nobody is laughing, except for Marley.

NOEL: Wasn't that expensive?

THE PROFESSOR: No. I bore the indignity of travelling by *Mega Bus* -25 pounds from London Victoria to Florence - and stayed with an old friend.

MARLEY: One of your old bum boy pals, Prof? Hee hee.

Silence.

NOEL: Why Florence?

THE PROFESSOR: I promised myself, some time ago, that I would visit *The Uffizi Gallery* at least every two years for the remainder of my life.

MARLEY: Uzi? Jason Statham had one of those in a film I was watching last night. Rat-a-tat-tat.

Silence.

NOEL: The Uffizi?

THE PROFESSOR: Yes. It's where they keep some of the finest Renaissance art works; notably Michelangelo's *David*.

MARLEY: Bet he was a *shirt lifter* as well.

THE PROFESSOR: If you are referring to Michelangelo, then you are correct in stating that the said genius was of the homosexual persuasion.

MARLEY: A puff! Told you. Hee hee.

Silence.

NOEL: How did you end up at Samaritus, Professor?

MARLEY: He got caught diddling with kids. Hee hee.

Silence.

THE PROFESSOR: I was married to a New England lady and lived in Boston, where I worked as a part time lecturer.

NOEL: At Boston University?

THE PROFESSOR: No, Harvard.

NOEL: You lectured in Art?

THE PROFESSOR: Amongst other things. My speciality was Medieval Philosophy, my doctorate focusing on the moral philosophy of *Boethius*.

NOEL: Boethius?

THE PROFESSOR: Yes. He wrote *The Consolation of Philosophy*. His work helped me through a troublesome divorce from my wife.

NOEL: In what way?

THE PROFESSOR: Boethius taught me that, despite the apparent inequality in life, there is a higher power. Rather like *Plato*.

Silence.

THE PROFESSOR (cont'd): Fame and wealth are ephemeral, and the only lasting and meaningful attribute that a man possesses is his moral integrity. A good man is a good man, and that can never be taken away from him, despite the vagaries that life throws in one's way.

MARLEY: Too many long words, man.

NOEL: A good man is a good man. I like that.

Pause.

NOEL: It's part of the reason why I joined Samaritus. I want to be a good man.

THE PROFESSOR: I joined Samaritus out of desperation. Arriving back in England, after a costly divorce settlement, I found myself homeless and destitute.

NOEL: So, Samaritus held out the hand of friendship? Isn't that the point, that Samaritus is founded on the worthiest of principles? From each according to his ability to each according to his need?

THE PROFESSOR: You quote Marx. I prefer Orwell: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others".

NOEL: That sounds cynical.

THE PROFESSOR: You'll find out.

MARLEY: There's a pub called *The Orwell* in Wigan.

Silence.

NOEL: Here we are. The sat nav says that Filbert Street is next on the left. Can you keep an eye out for number 10, Professor?

THE PROFESSOR: Certainly.

Pause.

THE PROFESSOR (cont'd): Number 8, Number 12. Stop!

NOEL: Where's Number 10?

THE PROFESSOR: It seems to be that commercial property that is set back off the road. Presumably that is number 10 Filbert Street?

EXT. The van pulls up by the roadside, facing an un-numbered property with darkened windows. The Professor gets out of the van and approaches the building with the darkened windows. He enters the door after ringing the bell, stays in the building for a couple of minutes, then reappears and walks back to the van.

INT. Van cabin. The 3 Samaritus men are back seated in the van.

NOEL: Well?

THE PROFESSOR: I've just spoken with a charming, albeit scantily clad, Asian lady, and she claims that officially 10 Filbert Street no longer exists. The site that used to house number 10 Filbert Street is now addressed, "Wendy Lee's Massage Parlour".

NOEL: So they don't know anything about a wardrobe?

THE PROFESSOR: Alas, no. It seems you have been sent on a wild goose chase. Welcome to Samaritus.

INT. Van cabin. Noel looks angry, while Marley is chuckling to himself. The Professor is wearing a world weary expression.

THE PROFESSOR (cont'd): Your initiation has begun, Noel. I fear that this will not be the only prank played on you today.

NOEL: Right. What's the next delivery today?

INT. Van Cabin. Noel looks at his pile of dockets. Marley shrugs his shoulders.

NOEL (cont'd): Okay, it says here, 278 Mohammed Crescent, Oldham. A sofa bed for delivery. Let's go.

EXT. The van starts to drive off but Noel suddenly pulls the van up by the roadside. He gets out of the van to look at the off front wheel. The tyre is completely flat. Noel kicks the tyre in frustration.

EXT. Noel is tightening the last of the nuts on the newly fitted spare wheel. The Professor and Marley are sat on a nearby wall. Marley is smoking. Noel is soaked in sweat. Noel is packing away the jack and wheelbrace in the back of the van.

NOEL: Right, we are only an hour behind schedule. Let's head for Mohammed Crescent.

EXT. The three Samaritus men get in the van and they head off.

INT. Van cabin. Noel is driving. Marley and The Professor are sat by his side. Noel glances at his pile of delivery dockets.

NOEL: It says here that the sofa bed is for "JIMMY". The address is showing on the sat nav so it looks like the place exists.

THE PROFESSOR: Is there a phone number for Jimmy?

NOEL: No, why?

THE PROFESSOR: It's always advisable to have a client's phone number in case they aren't in when we turn up.

NOEL: Shit. I hadn't thought of that.

MARLEY: Without the tyre incident we would have been there an hour ago, man. Maybe Jimmy has gone out now?

EXT. Van pulls up outside a terraced house, 278 Mohammed Crescent. The front door of 278 is wide open. Noel, The Professor and Marley get out of the van and approach the door of 278.

NOEL: He must be in. The front door is wide open.

EXT. Front door of 278 which is ajar. Noel knocks on the door and rings the bell. There is no response.

NOEL (cont'd): Maybe Jimmy has popped out to the shop for a minute?

MARLEY: We could leave the sofa bed in the front garden.

NOEL: No. We can't do that. All we can do is wait for a few minutes.

MARLEY: We can't do that either as we are already behind with our work load.

NOEL: We'll have to double back here after our next job.

MARLEY: Your call, man.

NOEL: What do you think, Professor?

THE PROFESSOR: I don't know what to suggest. The door being wide open with no one at home is very strange. And of course we can't enter the house without permission.

NOEL: Right, we'll come back later.

EXT. The three Samaritus men get in the van and drive away from Mohammed Crescent.

EXT. The van arrives back at 278 Mohammed Crescent. The door to 278 is now shut. The three Samaritus men get out of the van and approach the house. Noel knocks on the door and rings the bell. There is no response.

NOEL: Still no reply but now the door is shut so he must have been back and we've missed him!

THE PROFESSOR: Try ringing Saul at Head Quarters and tell him what's happening.

EXT. Noel punches some numbers into his phone.

NOEL: Hello, is that Saul? It's Noel.

Pause.

NOEL (cont'd): I'm at 278 Mohammed Crescent. It's the sofa bed delivery. We came earlier but there was no one in, though strangely the door was wide open.

Pause.

NOEL (cont'd): So he was in all along and the door had been left open for our benefit?

Pause.

NOEL (cont'd): But how was I expected to know that Jimmy is profoundly deaf and can't hear the door bell or knocking on the door?

Pause.

NOEL: (cont'd): And now he has actually gone out, thinking that we weren't coming?

MARLEY: Told you.

NOEL: Well, I'm sorry Saul, but don't you think that it might have been useful to tell me that Jimmy has acute hearing problems?

Pause.

NOEL: Okay, okay. So what's the plan now?

Pause.

EXT. Noel finished his phone conversation and switches his phone off.

MARLEY: So what's the plan Noel?

NOEL: We'll have to come back again later.

EXT. Van drives away from Mohammed Crescent.

EXT. Van drives up to 278 Mohammed Crescent at high speed and screeches to a halt. Noel, The Professor and Marley get out of the van and head towards the front door of 278, which is once again wide open. Noel enters the house. After a minute Noel Reappears.

NOEL: Right lads let's get this sofa bed delivered. Jimmy is in the building!

EXT. Noel and The Professor start to unload the sofa bed from the back of the van. Marley is stood idly to one side rolling a cigarette. Clearly, the sofa bed is very heavy. Jimmy is stood in the doorway of 278 watching the action. Jimmy is smiling and making incomprehensible gestures using sign language. Jimmy seems to be happy with developments and Noel is trying to smile back as he heaves the sofa bed off the van and staggers towards the doorway. It is obvious even at this stage that the sofa bed is too wide to go through Jimmy's front door. Exasperated, Noel and The Professor put down the sofa bed on the pavement directly outside Jimmy's door. Noel and The Professor try half a dozen times to get the sofa bed through the doorway, using various angles and re-positionings of the sofa bed. The result is the same in each case, with the sofa getting jammed in the door frame.

NOEL: It's no use. It's too big for this doorway.

MARLEY: Ask Jimmy if we can use his back passage way.

EXT. Noel attempts to communicate with Jimmy along the lines that Marley has suggested. Using hand gestures, Noel simulates the thrusting of a large object through a doorway, which is round the back. Miraculously Jimmy gets Noel's meaning and mischievously points to his own backside, while raising a thumb of approval. Jimmy then points to an adjacent alleyway and beckons the Samaritus men to follow with the sofa bed.

EXT. The back of 278 Mohammed Crescent. A 6 feet wall is barring access to Jimmy's back yard. The only option is for the sofa bed to be lifted over the wall into Jimmy's back yard. Jimmy is smiling and giving the Samaritus men gestures of encouragement. Noel and The Professor look at each other in resignation and start to lift the sofa bed over the wall. Marley is stood by with two sofa cushions in his grip. With a Herculean effort the sofa bed is heaved over the back wall and is now sitting in Jimmy's back yard. The problem now is that the sofa bed will not go through Jimmy's back door. Noel is at his wit's end with this latest obstacle. Jimmy is still smiling.

NOEL: What now?

THE PROFESSOR: We'll have to take the sofa bed apart. All I need is a screw driver.

NOEL: Do we have a screw driver?

MARLEY: The tool box is in the warehouse and should have been loaded on the van this morning.

NOEL: So we don't have a screwdriver?

MARLEY: Nope, man.

EXT: Noel attempts to ask Jimmy for a screw driver using hand gestures. Jimmy smiles, nods, and returns with an egg whisk from the kitchen. Seeing Noel's face drop, Jimmy then nods, returns to the kitchen, and reappears with a screw driver. Noel gives Jimmy the thumbs up . Then Noel realises that it is the wrong kind of screw driver. Noel smiles to himself and starts to disassemble the sofa bed with great difficulty. Eventually the sofa bed is dismantled and the separate pieces are transferred into Jimmy's house via the kitchen door.

INT. The pieces of the sofa bed are set out on the floor of Jimmy's living room. The Samaritus men and Jimmy are stood around looking at the wreckage.

NOEL: What time is it anybody?

MARLEY: 2-30pm, man.

NOEL: Late lunchtime. Marley, can you go and find a sandwich shop or a chippie and bring back food for three? Here's a Tenner. While you are doing that, The Professor and I will put this sofa bed back together, hopefully.

MARLEY: No problem, man.

INT. Jimmy's living room. Marley leaves the room. Noel starts to screw bits of sofa bed together. Jimmy is smiling and sat on a chair while eating a recently prepared hot meal.

INT. Jimmy's living room. Half an hour later and Noel has completed the assembly of the sofa bed. Jimmy, oblivious, is contentedly asleep in his chair. The Professor pats Noel on the back in a gesture of support. There is no sign of Marley.

INT. Van cabin. Noel and The Professor are sat in the van. It is getting dark outside. Marley can be seen approaching the van. Marley is holding a carrier bag. Marley gets in the passenger side of the van. Marley hands the carrier bag to The Professor.

MARLEY: I got you some chips, man.

THE PROFESSOR: They feel cold.

NOEL: Yeah, thanks Marley.

MARLEY: No problem.

NOEL: Where have you been for the last two hours?

MARLEY: I had to go walkabout, man. No chippies round here.

NOEL: Really?

MARLEY: Nah, man.

NOEL: What did you have to eat, Marley?

MARLEY: Chicken, rice n' peas, man, from a Jamaican cafe.

NOEL: And we got cold chips?

MARLEY: I didn't want to risk Jamaican food on you, man.

Pause.

NOEL: Any change?

MARLEY: Nah, man.

INT. Van cabin. Noel discards his bag of cold chips as does The Professor. Noel starts the ignition and the van drives off.

EXT. Samaritus building. It is dark and the moon is in the sky. Noel's van pulls up outside the warehouse. Noel, The Professor and Marley get out of the van. Noel walks towards Len's office. Saul and Mick Bairstow are stood by the warehouse. Marley winks at Saul who smiles back.

SAUL: How did it go, Marley?

MARLEY: Sweet, man. *Deaf Jimmy* played his usual blinder.

SAUL: And you wandered off for a 2 hour lunch break?

MARLEY: Yep, just as you told me, man.

MICK: I give him a week then.

SAUL: If that.

MARLEY: Yeah, man.

INT: The door to Len's office. Noel knocks. There is a discernible commotion and frantic movement inside the office. After 30 seconds Len grunts an "Enter" command. Noel enters the office. Sheila is adjusting her blouse. Len is sat, red faced, behind his desk.

LEN: Thank you Sheila. That will be all for now. I will see you later, as in tomorrow morning.

INT: Len's office. Sheila bustles past Noel and leaves the room. Len looks at his watch.

LEN: It looks like you've had a long day.

NOEL: An exasperating one, for sure, Len.

LEN: In what way, Noel?

NOEL: Aside from getting false delivery addresses, a flat tyre, a profoundly deaf customer who had to be revisited 3 times, and a companion who took an impromptu 2 hour lunch break, you mean?

LEN: Aah.

NOEL: Yes. Everything that could go wrong went wrong.

LEN: You realise that they are testing you? You being the new boy.

NOEL: Some test!

LEN: Yes it is. They want Porno Pete on the van and you out of the picture, for their own reasons.

NOEL: When you say *they*, you mean The Lifers?

LEN: Yes. Saul, Mick Bairstow, Marley and the rest.

NOEL: But I have no agenda. I come to work to do my job, and wish all the Companions well. Why would they victimise me in this way?

LEN: If you don't mind me saying, Noel, you are being naive.

NOEL: Naive?

LEN: Yes, naive.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Saul wants you off the van so that he can have his own man, Porno Pete, at the wheel, who will then do his bidding. We are talking about off the books furniture deliveries. They know that you are management and will therefore take no part in their scams. That's why, in Saul's thinking, you have to go.

NOEL: That's intolerable.

LEN : Marley and Mick Bairstow get a cut of any illicit furniture dealings, so they also want you removed from your post.

NOEL: Unbelievable.

LEN (cont'd): Moreover, Marley wants to personally pocket any tips that customers give the Van Crew companions; a practice he has developed into an art form. You will notice that Marley is always the last man to leave a delivery house, hoping to surreptitiously pocket any forthcoming gratuity. He subsequently uses the extra money to buy marijuana.

NOEL: I did notice that Marley always leaves houses last.

LEN (cont'd): Yep. Mick Bairstow, on the other hand, will spend his percentage on cheap cider.

NOEL: And you know all this and still Saul, Marley and Mick remain Companions?

LEN: Knowing and proving are two very different things. Saul, the mastermind of all Emmaus's dodgy dealings, is especially slippery. He always has an excuse for any apparent impropriety.

NOEL: There must be a way of catching Saul in the act?

LEN: I did once when he completely overstepped the mark

NOEL: What happened?

LEN: Saul was selling our furniture donations directly to a furniture dealer in Ashton. He was using Porno Pete as his delivery driver and Porno Pete, who couldn't stand the pressure, blurted out the truth to a companion who feeds me information. Though I was acting on hearsay I managed to get Saul banned for a month.

NOEL: Why only a month?

LEN: Saul appealed to the Samaritus Trustees, and they were not totally convinced of his guilt. Saul claimed that Porno Pete was the sole architect of the *private* furniture deliveries.

NOEL: So Samaritus, for all its good intentions, is a criminal enterprise run by an untouchable clique of corrupt individuals?

LEN: I'd say that was a tad harsh, and that you are being melodramatic.

NOEL: Why am I being melodramatic?

LEN: Because you have to realise that we are talking about formerly homeless men, who harbour a deep mistrust of mainstream values and morality, and have a highly developed sense of personal survival.

NOEL: So you condone their dishonest behaviour?

LEN: No, but until I have clear and unambiguous proof of any misdoing then I have to accept the *status quo*. You are new and will develop a more pragmatic mindset, with time.

NOEL: That sounds like a cop out.

LEN: Look Noel, I like you, but you have to deal with the world as it is and not how you would like it to be.

Pause.

LEN: Can I expect you at 8-45am tomorrow morning?

Pause.

NOEL: Yes, Len, I will be here.

LEN: Good.

Pause.

LEN: You have to look at the bigger picture, Noel. In the absence of a *smoking gun* we turn a blind eye to petty corruption. This community, for all its faults, works. Each year we donate several thousand pounds to other charities, and most of the Companions are needy cases who work hard and are honest.

NOEL: So the means justifies the ends?

LEN: In a way, yes. Samaritus is a microcosm of wider society , which is imperfect.

Pause.

LEN: Go home, Noel. It's been a long day. I will see you tomorrow.

NOEL: Goodnight Len.

INT: Noel shakes hands with Len and leaves the office. Len immediately reaches for the bottom drawer of his desk. He pulls out a pair of lady's panties, replaces them, and retrieves a half empty bottle of whiskey. He unscrews the bottle and takes a long swig.

EXT. The Tyre. Saul, Marley and Mick Bairstow are sat round a camp fire. They are drinking and passing round a joint. Niall is approaching.

NIALL: Alright knobheads? Who's going to lend me a fiver.

Silence.

NIALL (cont'd): I won't ask again.

MARLEY: When can I have it back?

NIALL: Never. The fiver is to stop me beating the crap out of you.

EXT. Marley stands while rummaging through his pockets. He produces a fiver which he hands to Niall.

NIALL: I thought you'd see it my way. Give me that cider as well.

EXT. Niall snatches Marley's bottle of cider away from him, and takes a long swig before throwing the bottle away. Niall then walks off.

MARLEY: Thanks for the support, man.

SAUL: I told you to give Niall a wide berth, but you started smoking with him and look where it's left you.

MARLEY: He scares me.

SAUL: He scares all of us but when he tried taxing me for money I stood my ground and threatened to cut his throat while he was asleep. That's the only language toe-rags like Niall understand.

MICK: Exactly. You have to fight fire with fire, Marley. He tried it on with me as well and I promised him that I'd get my machete out of the warehouse if he didn't back off

MARLEY: I know, man. It's just that violence isn't my thing.

SAUL: Yes, but the trick is to pretend that it is.

Pause.

SAUL (cont'd): All the same, scumbags like Niall need sorting out. He shouldn't be in Samaritus. He's not Companion material. This is a community and companions need to respect the rights of other people.

MICK: Yep. I'd say sociopathic Niall fails on that score.

SAUL: Leave it with me. I'll try and speed up Niall's departure, though the chances are he will screw things up himself. Even Len is getting pissed off with Niall's backchat and general lack of respect.

MARLEY: And he never gets out of bed for the morning meetings.

SAUL: Okay, I've said to leave it with me. Noel is the more pressing problem, though today's events went according to plan. As long as he's here he's costing us all money so more of the same tomorrow, understand?

MICK: Yep. I'll hide some of tomorrow's deliveries in the warehouse, and make sure a couple of the flat pack deliveries have screws and bolts missing.

SAUL: Good thinking, Mick. That will slow him down a bit. What have you got planned, Marley?

MARLEY: I'll steer the van into heavy traffic and roadworks where ever possible, man.

SAUL: That should be easy as he doesn't know the local roads.

MICK: What about you, Saul?

SAUL: Well, we can't use Deaf Jimmy again for a while, and another flat tyre would arouse suspicion.

Pause.

SAUL (cont'd): I was thinking more along the lines of writing the wrong post codes on the docket addresses, and not giving the customers' phone numbers.

MARLEY: Oh, and I can hide the A-Z, and cut the ratchet straps for tying up furniture in the van.

SAUL: Excellent. Let us raise a toast to a soon to be absent friend.

MICK: To Noel. Cheers.

MARLEY: Can someone give me a swig of cider?

SAUL and MICK: Go fuck yourself, Marley.

EXT. The Tyre. Saul and Mick Bairstow start laughing as Marley sits disconsolately and looks on.

INT. Community meeting, 8-45am. The whole community and staff are assembled in the Level 1 cafe area. There is also an additional figure, sat to Len's immediate left, who is neither staff nor companion.

LEN: Good morning everyone.

Silence.

LEN (cont'd): Has anyone seen Niall?

MARLEY: He's in bed, man.

LEN: Go and wake him up, Marley, and tell him to get his socks on and get down here.

MALEY: With pleasure, man.

INT. Marley leaves the room.

LEN (cont'd): The work rota is up on the notice board. So if anyone is not sure where they are working this morning then just consult the board. I have here (to my left) a lecturer from Tameside Adult Education College, Zac Keresh. Zac is running the NVQ2 Warehouse course at the college and will be updating the skills of selected companions here at Samaritus. Those enrolled on the course so far are The Professor, Samir, Big Drew, Pete, and Marley.

THE PROFESSOR: When will Zac be able to teach us given that most of us are occupied with our daily jobs? Every day I am out on the van.

LEN: Good question, Professor. Zac?

ZAC: No flies on you, "Professor". They told me you were good.

Pause.

ZAC (cont'd): I will be here Monday through Friday for the next 16 weeks and, with Len's permission, will take you out of your respective jobs for a couple of hours each week. I have all your course portfolios with me *today*, which I will hand over to you presently. Any class work will take place here and there will be practical workshops in your warehouse.

INT. Zac hands out files to The Professor, Samir, Big Drew, and Pete, while retaining Marley's file.

ZAC (cont'd): I know the portfolios look extremely professional but that's because I've put them together!

Silence.

ZAC: First of all I want to say to all my prospective students that I am no better than you. We just have different roles.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): My role is to teach and your role is to learn. I will assist you in any way that I can because I am passionate about teaching and in particular teaching warehousing skills. This whole course is very much my baby.

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): Some of you will find the Physics in this course difficult but extra help with Maths will be provided if needed and I will attempt to explain any tricky abstract concepts as simply as possible.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): As far as the Physics goes? Well, let's just say that I go away and study the scientists and what they have to say, and then I come back to you and explain the Physics in layman's terms.

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): Formal teaching will start next week but I wanted to come in this week in order to introduce myself to you, and break the ice. So with Len's permission I will now love you and leave you and see you all next week.

INT. Len nods at Zac and Zac gets up to leave the room. On his way out Zac addresses Joella out loud.

ZAC (cont'd): And you young lady will be my wife in two years time. You just don't know it yet! Ha ha.

Silence.

INT. Joella looks mortified by Zac's comment but there are one or two titters in the room. Zac leaves the room while Joella blushes. As Zac leaves a sleepy eyed Niall enters the room with Marley in close attendance. Zac thrusts a portfolio into Marley's hands and winks knowingly, without breaking his stride.

LEN: Afternoon, Niall.

NIALL: Don't take the piss.

LEN: We'll talk about this later, but attendance at morning meetings is not optional.

NIALL: They are a waste of time.

LEN: Nevertheless, you need to attend.

NIALL: Whatever.

INT. Zac re-enters the room. Zac points at Noel and starts to address Noel.

ZAC: I forgot something. Noel, you need to go on an advanced driving and safety course, which I can also teach here. I notice that you haven't got your HGV2 License and, as things stand, if anything bad happens on the van then you my friend are going straight to jail.

Pause.

ZAC: That okay with you, Len? You are the man with the biggest balls in the room and It *is* a legal requirement.

LEN: If it's a legal requirement then Noel must do the driving and safety course that you are referring to.

NOEL: I've driven 6 ton vans before without a problem.

ZAC: That was then and this is now. They've tightened the law up. Safety on the van is paramount. You wouldn't believe some of the horrific accidents that can happen in vans if the driver isn't properly trained. I have a video on my phone of a van driver being decapitated, because he didn't secure a load of sheet metal correctly. It would make your hair curl, mate.

NOEL: Well, if you insist that I do the driving and safety course?

ZAC: I do, mate. I'll have a portfolio made up for you next time I see you, and it will be very professional because I will have put it together! But that's next week. Now, Len and all, I have to go. See you next week.

INT. Zac finally leaves the room. There is a stunned silence.

NIALL: Who's that knobhead?

Silence.

LEN: Actually, I've just remembered something.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): Samir. You will have to do the cooking today. Our usual chef has got an appointment for his feet.

SAMIR: No problem, my friend.

MICK: Yeah, but it will be a bloody problem for us, the companions.

LEN: Are you offering to cook for the community then, Mick?

Silence.

LEN (cont'd): No? I thought so. Samir is good enough to offer his services in the kitchen and I'm sure he will conjure us up something tasty.

SAMIR: I will cook something special like my Grandmother cooks in The Sudan.

SAUL: For fuck's sake. Camel turds in batter.

SAMIR: You insult me my friend but for you I will prepare a feast. This is the way of my people.

MICK: Aye, and we'll all be on the bog for a week after sampling your desert desserts!

LEN: Enough!. Samir is cooking and you will all have to lump it.

SAUL: Lump it being the operative phrase.

LEN: Enough.

MICK: Who is going in bric-a-brac sort if Samir is cooking?

LEN: Niall will be in bric-a-brac sort today.

NIALL: Sweet, man.

THE PROFESSOR: So the lunatics will have the key to the asylum today?

NIALL: I don't understand what you are saying Professor but if I find out that you are taking the piss it's going off.

THE PROFESSOR: Is that a threat?

NIALL: No, it's a promise.

LEN: I hope that wasn't a threat, Niall.

NIALL: I don't make threats.

LEN: I hope not.

NIALL: Whatever.

LEN: Moving on, I think Joella has something to say.

JOELLA: Thanks, Len. Yes, I do have some exciting news. The BBC have been in touch and they want to make a short video of Samaritus Mossley, featuring the Companions. It's to be a fly on the wall style documentary on the day to day life of Samaritus.

SAUL: Are we getting paid?

JOELLA: No, but it will be great publicity for the community.

Saul: Fuck it then.

LEN: That's rather short sighted of you, Saul. As Joella says, it will be of great benefit to the community, getting our message out there to the general public. That can only be a good thing and will ultimately benefit us all.

SAUL: Fuck it.

MICK: And I don't want my ex missus finding out where I am living.

JOELLA: Participation in the film will be optional.

MICK: Thank fuck for that.

LEN: Anyway, the BBC are coming in and that's that. The Trustees have approved the documentary so it's happening. But as Joella says, if you don't want to be in it then that is your choice.

THE PROFESSOR: What if nobody wants to be in the film? Won't Samaritus then resemble *The Marie Celeste*?

MARLEY: What's this *Mary* bird got to do with the price of cheese?

THE PROFESSOR: *The Marie Celeste* was a short story written by Conan Doyle, about a ship that had mysteriously lost its crew.

NOEL: Yes, I've heard of that.

LEN: Quite. I think your literary references are wasted on us, Professor.

THE PROFESSOR: I do try my best to elevate the tone, Leonard.

MARLEY: Puff.

NIAL: I don't understand the prick either.

LEN: Right, that will do.

Pause.

LEN: Noel, this morning I want you to make a scrap run with the van, and drop off the metal that's built up in the scrap shed. The Professor will direct you to Mullaney's Scrap Yard.

NOEL: No problem.

LEN: Good. After that you can return here and pick up today's delivery dockets from Saul. Okay with you Saul?

SAUL: Whatever your Higness decrees.

LEN: Good. Unless any one has anything to say this meeting is at a close.

Silence.

INT. The meeting breaks up and companions and staff leave the room.

EXT. Mullaney's Scrap Yard. The Samaritus van is parked next to a huge mountain of scrap metal. Noel and The Professor are in the back of the van throwing scrap metal out of the back of the van and on to the pile. Marley is stood off to the side of the van, smoking, and out of ear shot.

THE PROFESSOR: I've been meaning to have a chat with you, Noel. It's alright, Marley can't hear us talking. It's about the sabotage campaign that certain companions are waging against you.

NOEL: You noticed too.

THE PROFESSOR: It was the same with the last driver. He couldn't take it and was driven out.

NOEL: Well, I'm made of sterner stuff. I'm here for the long haul.

THE PROFESSOR: Good for you, but all the same I think I may be able to help you.

NOEL: In what way?

THE PROFESSOR: For a start ignore any navigational directions from Marley. He will deliberately take you down blind allies and into heavy traffic. A useful rule of thumb might be to do the opposite of anything he suggests.

NOEL: Okay. Anything else?

THE PROFESSOR: I have a good knowledge of the area and will recognize customer addresses, even without a post code. Listen to me and I'll get you where you need to go. Also I'll locate deliveries in the warehouse, which tend to get hidden, and make sure all the nuts and bolts, screws etc are included with the deliveries.

NOEL: Why are you helping me, Professor? Won't you incur the wrath of The Lifers?

THE PROFESSOR: I can handle Saul and company. Let's just say that I don't like their style of operating which is very much against the ethos of Samaritus.

NOEL: This sounds like a conversation I had with Len.

THE PROFESSOR: I bet he told you to look at the bigger picture and lauded the achievements of the community in raising money for other charities?

NOEL: Yes he did as a matter of fact. I'm not sure if I'm satisfied with his viewpoint.

THE PROFESSOR: Not all the companions are bad apples, Noel. Just hold on to that thought.

EXT. Noel and The Professor are coming to the end of the scrap unloading. Marley throws his cigarette butt away and ambles towards the van.

MARLEY: So what have you two been gassing about?

NOEL: We didn't have time for a chat as we were working. You should try it.

MARLEY: I work harder than any man in the community.

NOEL: Yeah, right. Let's get weighed out and paid for the scrap. We need to be heading back for lunch.

MARLEY: Samir is cooking. it will be shit.

EXT. Noel pulls the back door down on the van. All three men climb into the van cabin. The van fires up and heads towards the weigh bridge situated by the scrap yard office.

INT. Samaritus dining room/kitchen. Samir is stood in the serving hatch area. Companions have formed a queue and are helping themselves to the food which is set out in metal trays.

MARLEY: What's this shite, Samir?

SAMIR: Spaghetti and vegetables, my ignorant friend.

MARLEY: Where's the meat, my ignorant chef?

NIALL: Yeah, where's the meat? You dodgy sand jockey.

SAMIR: There is no meat. This is good for you.

SAUL: Fuck that. Where's the usual pie and chips?

SAMIR: Listen you pigs, this is good food.

MARLEY: What are these green bits in the spaghetti?

SAMIR: Coriander and mint.

SAUL: Oh, this gets better. I'm not eating this swill.

SAMIR: Swill is for pigs. You act like pigs so you get swill.

SAUL: I'm going to see Len about this.

MICK: I'll come with you.

SAMIR: Fuck you all.

PORNO PETE: I'm going to eat in my room.

INT. Kitchen serving area. Niall throws his plate of spaghetti and vegetables against the wall. Marley does the same and the two young ring leaders start to have a food fight. Samir closes the serving hatch and disappears from view. In the midst of the chaos The Professor is sat quietly eating his food. At the next table Big Drew is secretly feeding spaghetti to a rat, which is secreted in his inside coat pocket. Porno Pete leaves with his plate and heads for his room for a bout of film watching over lunch. Mick and Saul leave, as a delegation, in the direction of Len's office. The food fight and general pandemonium continue unabated with Marley and Niall engineering the chaos.

INT. The next morning. Cafe area. All the companions and staff are present for the daily meeting, along with Zac Karesh. Proceedings are being filmed by Nigel, a BBC interviewer and camera man.

LEN: First of all good morning to everybody.

ZAC: Good morning.

Pause.

LEN: As you can see, we have a BBC documentary maker with us this morning, Nigel.

INT. Nigel raises a hand in acknowledgement.

LEN (cont'd): Nigel will be with us for a few weeks, making a film about Samaritus.

Pause.

LEN (cont'd): I know it's a bit strange to be filmed going about our daily business, but try and pretend that you are not on camera, and act normally.

THE PROFESSOR: Big Brother is watching you!

MARLEY: Big Brother? I like the bird with the big tits.

INT. Sheila adjusts her ample cleavage, in full view of a filming Nigel. Joella frowns.

LEN: Be that as it may, Marley. Our film will raise public awareness about Samaritus and what we do here. That can only be a good thing, though I'm glad filming didn't start during yesterday lunchtime's disgraceful display.

SAUL: Samir needs to cook English food.

MARLEY: Yeah, what's with the spaghetti and vegetables?

NIAL: Omar is trying to poison us, man.

SAMIR: Pigs!

LEN: Well, from now on there will be no cooked meals provided. You can make your own individual eating arrangements.

SAUL: That's not on.

MARLEY: Suits me. I'll go to the chippie.

LEN: The decision has been made. Due to your lack of appreciation for Samir's efforts in the kitchen, the kitchen is now effectively closed. And, Marley and Niall... I would like to see you both after this meeting.

INT. Niall is scowling.

LEN (cont'd): The work rota is pinned on the notice board, so you can all see what work you have been assigned today. Also, Zac is with us this morning and will be teaching those on the Warehousing NVQ 2 course.

INT. Shot of Zac nodding in energetic agreement.

LEN (cont'd): I think Nigel may call on individual companions from time to time to speak to the camera one to one. That includes us staff, I believe?

INT. Nigel, who is currently filming, nods in agreement.

LEN: Okay, let's get out there and make some money for the community.

INT. Cafe area. The meeting breaks up and people start to leave the room. Len gestures to Niall and Marley to follow him to his office.

INT. Len's Office. Len is sat behind his desk. Niall and Marley are seated and facing Len.

LEN: Before you start making excuses, I have only one thing to say.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): You are both on written warnings. Sheila will type them up this morning and I will hand them to you later, personally. Anymore problems from you two within the next 28 days and you will both be asked to leave the community. Do you understand?

INT. Niall has risen and is leaving the room.

LEN(cont'd): Niall, do you understand?

NIALL: Whatever, Boss.

LEN: Marley?

MARLEY: Yeah, man.

INT. Outside Len's office. Saul accosts Niall.

SAUL: Niall, I just thought I'd let you know about a rumour that is going around about you.

NIALL: What rumour, Grandad?

SAUL: The Professor is telling every one that you are a *puff*.

NIALL: Right, that old prick is a dead man.

INT. Niall storms off. Saul smiles to himself as Marley comes out of Len's office.

SAUL: I've sorted out The Professor. With him out of commission it should be easier to get rid of Noel.

MARLEY: Niall looked very angry just now.

SAUL: He's fuming, I'd say.

INT. Dining room. A standing Zac is about to start his NVQ 2 Warehousing lecture. The Professor, Samir, Big Drew, Porno Pete, and Marley are sat round a table with their respective portfolios opened. Nigel is filming the action.

ZAC: Today we are going to talk about health and safety in the workplace.

Pause.

INT. Shot of Zac smiling archly at the camera.

ZAC(cont'd): Can someone tell me what the major cause of injury in the workplace is?

BIG DREW: Back injuries.

ZAC: Good. I'll come to back injuries, but that wasn't what I had in mind for the major cause of injuries in the workplace.

Pause.

ZAC (cont'd): Anyone else?

THE PROFESSOR: Slips and trips?

ZAC: Nearly, Professor. Slips, trips and falls is the answer.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): Slips, trips and falls.

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): And how can we prevent slips, trips and falls?

MARLEY: By watching where we are going.

ZAC: Good. Anything else?

PORNO PETE: By keeping the place tidy.

ZAC: Very good. Avoid blocking areas where employees, and customers, walk.

PORNO PETE: By cleaning spillages?

ZAC: Only if you are trained to do so, Pete.

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): Cleaning products can be hazardous so you have to be properly trained when using them. Mix the wrong chemicals together and BOOM! No more Pete.

Pause.

INT. Shot of Zac nodding sagely to the camera.

ZAC(cont'd): But I like your style Pete, clean lifestyle, dirty mind!

MARLEY: A very dirty mind in Pete's case!

ZAC: Okay, I'll do the jokes and the stories. In fact I want to tell you a story now about how easy it is to cause yourself a back injury. Zac nods at Big Drew in acknowledgement of the earlier *back* reference.

Pause.

INT. Shot of Zac as he encourages Nigel to come closer. It is clear that Zac is about to impart some profound information.

ZAC(cont'd): You may not know this, but I have an exotic family background.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): My Father is Armenian, and my Mother an Italian woman.

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): When I was 16 years old I was in my bedroom one evening waiting to go out with my mates. My little fat Italian Mother was downstairs in the kitchen with her equally plump Italian girl friends. They were listening to Italian dance music and I could hear the rythm of the rustic tunes through my floorboards.

INT. Zac presses some buttons on his smart phone. He places the phone on the desk in front of him. The haunting theme from *The Godfather* starts to play, a fitting musical accompaniment to his anecdote.

ZAC(cont'd): I was waiting to go out with my mates. Here's a photograph of me when I was 16 years old.

INT. Zac extracts a phot from his wallet. He shows the snap first to the camera and then passes it to The Professor, who subsequently passes it round the class.

ZAC: As you can see I was a very fit, Adonis-like youth.

MARLEY: You've changed a lot. Now you look like a fat Robbie Williams.
Ha ha.

INT. Shot of Zac glowering at Marley. Zac quickly regains his affable expression and smiles at the camera.

ZAC: Okay I'll take that one on the chin. And as for looking like a famous pop star, let's not go down that avenue.

MARLEY: Like a fat pop star.

ZAC: Ha ha. Touche.

Silence. Apart from the sound of The Godfather theme tune.

ZAC(cont'd): So, I'm a super fit 16 year old waiting to go out with his mates, and I fall over as I'm trying to change my trousers. Course, the fall results in excruciating back pain. I've slipped a disc.

BIG DREW: What happened?

ZAC: Well, I can't move and my little fat Italian Mother can't hear my shouts for help as she is listening to her music downstairs. To compound my problems, the door to my bedroom is locked.

PORNO PETE: I always lock my bedroom door.

ZAC: Exactly, I think. No, the reason I had my door closed was because my fat Italian Mother had a habit of barging into my room with her mates and saying, " look at that magnificent penis, this boy would be a good husband for your daughters". That's why I had my door closed, out of a sense of modesty.

MARLEY: Don't believe you.

ZAC: Well, that's your privilege but I lay there for 3 hours and eventually my Father had to break the door down. My slipped disc then required a stay in hospital for several days.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): The point that I'm trying to make is that anyone can sustain a back injury at any time. Even super fit athletes can injure their backs. It is not the sole preserve of fat middle aged men like you, Marley.

INT. Shot of Marley looking offended.

ZAC(cont'd): So, what's the moral of the story?

MARLEY: Don't lock your bedroom door?

ZAC: Ha ha. No, the moral is to always take care of our backs.

BIG DREW: Keep your back straight and knees bent.

ZAC: Very good Drew. I think I can turn this off now.

INT. Zac turns of The Godfather theme tune which has been playing continuously on a loop.

ZAC: Back straight and knees bent. That's what I want you to take away with you today if you remember nothing else.

THE PROFESSOR: As well as Slips, Trips and Falls being the major cause of injury in the workplace?

ZAC: Yes, Professor, that as well.

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): Okay, I think we take a short 10 minute toilet break and then meet back here. Thank you.

MARLEY: If you go to the bog don't lock the door, whatever you do. Ha ha.

SAMIR: And don't pour any bleach down the toilet if you are not trained to do so, my friend.

MARLEY: Good one, Samir.

ZAC: Okay, see you back here in 10, and I do the funnies!

INT. Zac leaves the room. Zac then re-enters the room.

ZAC(cont'd): Can someone tell me where the toilet is?

INT. Len is facing Nigel's camera in a 1-1 interview. Close up of Len's face.

LEN: The public treat you differently when you are homeless. I started off as a companion myself. I know how that feels. I was a washed up drunk living on the streets of York. My third marriage had failed and my life had gone into a downward spiral. Samaritus threw me a lifeline.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Look at me now. I've made a success of my life.

Silence.

LEN(cont'd): Some of the new lads can't believe that I'm a former companion. They find it impossible to credit that I was once a homeless no-hoper.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): I know.

Shot. Len shakes his head in disbelief at the incredulity of his statement.

INT. Zac's NVQ 2 Warehousing Skills class is set to reconvene after a short 10 minute toilet break. Zac is readying himself to begin while the companion class members are settling back in their seats. Nigel is filming the action.

ZAC: Okay, comrades, let's press on.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): Can anyone tell me what the word *communication* means?

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): Good. Sometimes communication can be non verbal. I'm looking at your body language and you are communicating to me that the NVQ 2 Warehousing Skills course is a load of bollocks.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): But verbal communication *is* important in the workplace and generally in life.

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): When you are in bed with a beautiful woman, communication is vital. Otherwise you might end up doing something that you shouldn't! Ha ha.

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): Seriously. My job is to help you improve your communication skills.

Pause.

ZAC: Professor, have you ever heard of *Johari's Window*?

PROFESSOR: A 2 by 2 matrix, designed by a couple of second rate American psychologists, which serves to illustrate how we are perceived by ourselves and by others. Ultimately its purpose is to improve interpersonal relationships. That Johari's Window?

ZAC: *Zactly*. I can see that you have been doing your homework, Professor.

PROFESSOR: Not really. JOHARI was the answer to 3 Across in The Times Crossword last Monday.

ZAC: Really? What was the clue?

PROFESSOR: Psychologist's Window - Mighty blank Young. Female secret agent. If I recall.

ZAC: I can see that I'm going to have to watch you, Prof.

MARLEY: What's a fucking matrix?

ZAC: Forget the matrix, or matrices.

MARLEY: It was a good film..... I think.

ZAC: Forget films. Johari's Window, without going into technicalities, is a tool for improving inter-personal communications. The aim is to reveal something about oneself that may not be common knowledge to others, in return for a personal piece of information from, say, a work colleague.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): Already, you know that I am half Armenian and half Italian. You know that I slipped a disc in my back when I was 16 years old and about the circumstances surrounding that incident. In return I would like you each of you to tell me something about yourself.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): Professor, why did your marriage break up?

Silence.

PROFESSOR: None of your business, Zac.

ZAC: You sound defensive, mate.

PROFESSOR: Not really. I just don't think it's any of your business.

ZAC: But I've told you about myself.

PROFESSOR: An anecdote from your alledged childhood that may or may not be true and which I did not solicit?

ZAC: Oh it's true alright, mate.

PROFESSOR: I don't care. Your Johari Window approach is just another name for snooping. It is tantamount to manipulation.

ZAC: What are you trying to hide, Professor?

Shot. Zac nods knowingly at Nigel's camera.

Silence.

ZAC: Your silence speaks volumes, Professor. Don't you want to improve inter personal relationships in Samaritus?

PROFESSOR: The day to day interactions between the Companions is characterised by bickering, backbiting and mockery. Your psycho-babble isn't going to change that basic fact.

ZAC: I can see that you are a glass half empty man, Professor.

PROFESSOR: Go fuck yourself.

MARLEY: Wooo. The Professor is angry. Diddums.

PROFESSOR: And you can shut the fuck up as well, you diminutive cretin.

MARLEY: Fuck you too Professor, sideways. Just wait till Niall catches up with you.

Shot. The Professor looks confused by Marley's remark.

ZAC: Leaving The Professor's secrecy to one side, which I think is very revealing, just remember Johari's Window. Look it up on the internet tonight.

BIG DREW: The internet is down.

MARLEY: Yeah, Porno Pete has brought the system down with all his porno.

PORNO PETE: That's not true.

ZAC: So, you are into porn, Pete? Tell me about your addiction.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): This is just what I'm talking about. We need to get behind people's facades and bring their hidden dark side into the brightly lit public arena.

INT. 1-1 interview between Mick Bairstow and Nigel. Close up of Mick Bairstow.

MICK: Samaritus saved my life. I would have drunk myself to death if it hadn't been for this community.

Pause.

MICK(cont'd): Now I have a reason to get out of bed in the morning. Working in the warehouse has given me a sense of purpose. This is a working community and we don't tolerate slackers.

NIGEL: When you say *we* who do you mean?

MICK: The Companions, mate. The people who run this community and do all the bloody work.

Pause.

MICK(cont'd): Not the management or poncey drivers.

NIGEL: You don't like *outsiders* much do you, Mick?

MICK: No. They can't do the bloody jobs that they are paid to do. That's why. If you can't do the job *reet* then you shouldn't be doing the bloody job.

Pause.

MICK(cont'd): Take that new driver, Noel. I wish somebody would take him.

Pause.

MICK(cont'd): He brings back damaged furniture because he hasn't tied it up in the van properly. Then we have to throw the damaged items away. The incompetent idiot is costing us money.

INT. 1-1 interview between Marley and Nigel. Close up shot of Marley.

MARLEY: Samaritus is my life. I've been here 7 years now.

NIGEL: Would you ever consider leaving the community?

MARLEY: Thought about it but there ain't no jobs out there, man.

NIGEL: So, you are happy living here?

MARLEY: it's alright apart from one or two idiots.

NIGEL: Idiots?

MARLEY: Yeah, man, like the new driver.

NIGEL: Noel?

MARLEY: Yeah, man. He deliberately misses collections and breaks furniture with his clumsiness. I've tried to help him, but you can only do so much. He's not a patch on Porno Pete.

INT. 1-1 interview between Saul and Nigel. Close up shot of Saul.

SAUL: This community is going to the dogs. If it isn't broke, why fix it? That's where management is going wrong, bringing in new people.

NIGEL: New people?

SAUL: Yeah, like that prick, Noel.

Pause.

SAUL(cont'd): I'm getting complaints all day long from customers on the phone. Noel has been rude or broken something in their house. The man is a liability. We never had these problems with Porno Pete. Noel smells as well.

INT. Zac resumes his NVQ 2 Warehousing Skills class. The Professor, Samir, Big Drew, Porno Pete and Marley are in attendance. Nigel is filming the action.

ZAC: Compadres, welcome back.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): We talked earlier about improving interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Can someone tell me why it is important to get on with our work colleagues?

MARLEY: It isn't important. If I don't like someone then I just ignore them.

ZAC: But we can't afford to do that, Marley. We have to bury personal differences and work professionally.

MARLEY: Or ignore them.

ZAC: No, Marley. No. An organisation cannot work without effective communication between workmates. Good communication is the oil that makes the organizational machine run smoothly.

MARLEY: Whatever, man. I ignore the van driver because he's useless.

ZAC: You need to interact with Noel on a mature professional basis.

MARLEY: Can't, mate. No can do.

Shot of Zac, shaking his head.

ZAC: Can anyone else tell me why good communication is important?

Silence.

ZAC(cont'd): To prevent accidents in the workplace?

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): If there is an oil spill and you don't tell anybody about it then what will happen?

BIG DREW: Someone could slip on the oil.

ZAC: Zactly. You see why we need communication, Marley?

MARLEY: Nah, man.

ZAC: So you'd let Noel slip on an oil patch?

MARLEY: Yep. As far as I'm concerned the man is an accident waiting to happen anyway.

ZAC: Okay, Marley, I'll ask you *again* about communication, at a later date.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): But, allow me to wrap up today's session on a more positive note.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): Let me relate a story.

THE PROFESSOR: Using Johari's Window?

ZAC: You may scoff, Prof. But allow me tell you about a mate who was so down on his luck he was suicidal, mate.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): However, due to his huge balls, he managed to turn his life around.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): Instead of giving up on life, Marley, he used *communication* to reach out to people. These people were in need of his help but didn't know it until he communicated with them.

THE PROFESSOR: Did he tell them not to slip, trip and fall?

Pause.

ZAC: In a way, yes, he did. But sometimes one has to risk slipping and tripping and falling in order to achieve one's life goals.

BIG DREW: Like stepping over an oil spill?

PORNO PETE: Or not informing the cleaner of an oil spillage?

INT. Shot of Zac nodding sagely.

SAMIR: Or not using the correct bleach to clean the toilet?

MARLEY: Or just falling over for a laugh and then claiming the compo! Ha ha.

ZAC: In a way, you are all right, though I sense an undercurrent of *mockery*.

Pause.

ZAC: But, it is my mate who is having the last laugh.

THE PROFESSOR: in what way?

ZAC: Because my friend had a dream and he ended up living that dream.

Pause.

ZAC(Cont'd): He got on a plane to South Africa and started selling elite cheese products to the cash rich Afrikaans.

MARLEY: You are having a laugh?

THE PROFESSOR: Alas, no, I think Mr Keresch is serious.

ZAC: You are spot on Professor. I *am* totally serious.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): My mate went out there and identified a niche market. He realized that cash rich Afrikaans were looking for that touch of class. And what better mark of one's achievement in life than to have a bespoke cheese, tailored to one's exact gustatory specifications, which bore the family name and crest, for all time.

THE PROFESSOR: Isn't cheese just cheese?

ZAC: No, amigo. The cheese my mate is selling is patented, and can only be produced for a specific customer who has bought the rights to that one-off, unique cheese. Yes, there will be other cheeses out there, but none of them will be exactly the same as the cheese that bears one's family crest.

MARLEY: What a load of shit.

ZAC: My mate is a millionaire.

THE PROFESSOR: It does sound like a cheesy dream.

MARLEY: Hee hee. Cheesy fucking nightmare more like.

ZAC: Okay class, I can see that I am wasting my time with you, for now. Just remember to follow your dreams in life.

THE PROFESSOR: I agree. I'm expecting huge employment dividends on completion of the NVQ 2 Warehousing Skills Course.

ZAC: Really?

THE PROFESSOR: No, I'm joking.

MARLEY: Cheesy nightmare. Hee hee.

ZAC: I'll ask you again, Marley, why is *communication* important?

MARLEY: It isn't.

Silence.

INT. The class breaks up and Marley and the other students start to leave the room. Zac, in thoughtful mood, is packing away his lecture notes. Nigel stops filming and turns his camera off.

INT. 1-1 interview between Nigel and Joella. Close up of Joella's face. Nigel is filming.

JOELLA: Hi, I'm Joella, the Retail Manager. I oversee all aspects of the Retail Business side of Samaritus.

NIGEL: What exactly does that entail?

JOELLA: Well, through a mutual acquaintance of ours at the BBC, I arranged this documentary for a start!

Pause.

JOELLA(cont'd): A big part of my job is to promote the name of Samaritus and get our message out there to the wider public.

NIGEL: Yes, this documentary is part of our "Community Outreach Initiative". The BBC don't just live in Media City. We like to get *out there* as well.

JOELLA: Exactly, and by the way, give Johnie at Outreach my regards.

NIGEL: Will do, Joella.

JOELLA: I have also recently organized an Art Exhibition at Ashton Art Gallery, featuring some of the Companions' photography and paintings. The exhibits will be on show for the next 3 months.

NIGEL: What is the exhibition called?

JOELLA: It's called "Hidden Depths - The art work of formerly homeless men".

Pause.

JOELLA: I also organize the Manchester Samaritus Market each X-Mas, when we set up a stall in St Anne's Square, and sell collectible furniture items directly to the public.

NIGEL: Is that successful?

JOELLA: Very.

Pause.

INT. Shot of Joella. She is getting visibly more enthusiastic.

JOELLA(cont'd): Moreover, I drive to Paris in our Samaritus van every Summer, with a couple of Companions, and we take part in an International Samaritus Trade Fare. Last year we sold a thousand pounds worth of items, which we donated to various homeless charities.

NIGEL: So, your job is very varied and time consuming.

JOELLA: Extremely.

NIGEL: Do you have any day to day involvement in the Samaritus shop here? I noticed that Saul seems to run things most of the time.

JOELLA: I have some input on display organization.

NIGEL: What about the pricing of furniture and bric-a-brac?

JOELLA: I tend to leave that to Saul.

Pause.

JOELLA(cont'd): This is a Companion led business. I think it would be patronizing of me to take control of all aspects of the day to day running of the shop.

NIGEL: So, Saul prices up the items for sale in the shop?

JOELLA: Yes, mostly. We have to trust the Companions.

Pause.

NIGEL: Saul runs the money side of the business then, while you are more concerned with public relations?

JOELLA: I'd say that was a simplification of my role.

Pause.

NIGEL: I see.

INT. Shot of Joella looking slightly uncomfortable. Nigel stops filming and switches his camera off.

INT. The Professor is leaving the cafe area after Zac's class. Saul approaches The Professor.

SAUL: Professor, can you go to the Scrap Shed and sort me out the brass? Apparently, some idiot has thrown it in the light iron pile. You, Noel and Marley are doing a light iron scrap run this afternoon so it needs to be sorted beforehand.

THE PROFESSOR: Why me?

SAUL: Because you are one of the few people I can trust to do the job right.

THE PROFESSOR: Flattery will get you nowhere, Saul.

SAUL: Be that as it may, you have been picked for the job. Just do it.

THE PROFESSOR: Okay.

INT. Saul walks off while The Professor heads for the Scrap Shed, which abuts the warehouse.

INT. Scrap Shed. A small shed that contains various piles of scrap metal. The Professor enters. As he does Niall, who has been lying in wait behind the door, closes the door behind The Professor. Niall is holding a large piece of lead piping.

NIALL: Finally, we meet Professor.

THE PROFESSOR: Who do you think you are, Sherlock Holmes?

NIALL: I've had enough of your mouth. So you think that I'm a puff?

THE PROFESSOR: Don't be absurd.

INT. Niall lunges at The Professor with the lead pipe. The Professor expertly side steps the attempted blow and karate chops Niall on the back of the neck. Niall stumbles forward and bangs his head against a metal bed frame. Niall lies motionless. The Professor feels Niall's pulse but immediately discovers that Niall is dead. The Professor notices a large metal trunk in the corner of the shed. He lifts Niall into the trunk and locks it with the key that is in the lock. He then pockets the key before dragging the trunk into the light iron pile and covering it with a couple of old bikes and bed frames. The Professor then leaves the Scrap Shed.

EXT. Mullaney's Scrap Yard. The Samaritus van has backed up to a giant pile of scrap light iron. The Professor and Noel drag the iron trunk, containing Niall's body, off the back of the van. Nigel is unwittingly filming the action from a few yards away, with Marley providing the verbal commentary.

MARLEY: That metal box looks heavy!

NOEL: Bloody hell, this is a dead weight.

THE PROFESSOR: It certainly is.

EXT. With The Professor, Marley and Noel aboard, the Samaritus van pulls away from the giant pile of light iron. Nigel is following in his car. A massive grabbing machine has picked up the iron trunk and has lifted it on to the top of the pile, where it will stay until it is crushed down in size.

INT. 1-1 interview between Nigel and The Professor. Close up shot of The Professor.

NIGEL: You are not a typical Companion, Professor. Certainly not in terms of your educational level.

THE PROFESSOR: I suppose not.

NIGEL: I believe that you have recently returned from the USA. Do you miss that lifestyle?

THE PROFESSOR: I miss my American wife but not America.

NIGEL: Are you still in touch with your wife?

THE PROFESSOR: No.

NIGEL: A reconciliation is out of the question?

THE PROFESSOR: Yes.

Pause.

NIGEL: You don't miss America then?

THE PROFESSOR: No, not America.

NIGEL: Why so?

THE PROFESSOR: America is a frivolous culture. It is a discredited corrupt society. The American people deserve better.

NIGEL: Yet you taught at Harvard?

THE PROFESSOR: True, but don't be impressed by the Harvard name. There are a lot of intellectual imposters at Harvard.

Pause.

NIGEL: Len told me that you were once in the military.

THE PROFESSOR: That was a long time ago and I was a young, romantic fool.

NIGEL: British army?

THE PROFESSOR: No, French.

NIGEL: How long were you in the French Foreign Legion?

THE PROFESSOR: 5 years.

NIGEL: Do you think you will be staying in this Samaritus community for long?

THE PROFESSOR: Not for much longer.

NIGEL: Where will you go?

THE PROFESSOR: Probably abroad. France or Italy.

NIGEL: Thank you for being so candid.

THE PROFESSOR: You are most welcome.

INT. The Professor rises from his chair and leaves. Nigel stops filming and switches off his camera.

INT. Furniture shop counter. Len approaches Saul who is stationed behind the counter. Marley is sat nearby.

LEN: Saul, have you seen Niall? I've been looking everywhere for him.

SAUL: No, I haven't seen him.

LEN: If you do see him, then tell him to come to my office at once.

SAUL: Will do, Len. I've noticed his absence myself.

LEN: He's gone AWOL again. The last time it was that young girl in Gorton. Two weeks he stayed away that time, and like a fool I let him carry on staying here. Well, no more. This time he's out for good.

SAUL: I thought I saw Niall with The Professor earlier this morning, near the Scrap Shed.

LEN: I'll ask The Professor then, when I see him.

INT. Len leaves the furniture shop. Saul turns to Marley.

SAUL: Marley, tell Mick to be at The Tyre tonight for an emergency meeting. This BBC film maker is watching everything we do, so we'll have to lay off Noel for a while. Niall hasn't hospitalized The Professor either, which is a surprise. So, Operation "Fuck Noel" is on hold for now.

MARLEY: Okay, man.

INT. Marley leaves his chair in the furniture shop and heads off to meet Mick Bairstow in the warehouse.

INT. Len's Office. Len is sat behind his desk. Nigel and Joella are sat in chairs facing Len. Nigel is not filming.

LEN: Hi Nigel. I've called you in for a quick word, off camera as it were, to see if you are getting all the assistance you need in making this documentary film?

NIGEL: Everyone is being very helpful. I'm sure the film will provide a fascinating insight into the Samaritus community here.

JOELLA: Have you been in touch with Johnie at BBC Outreach?

NIGEL: Yes, I have, and he is excited about this project. I have staked my professional reputation on the prospective film being compulsive viewing and a ratings hit.

LEN: That's what I'm a bit worried about. I don't want the film to be sensationalist and ultimately critical of Samaritus.

NIGEL: I don't think it will be. The Companions and staff are all well rounded human characters with their respective strengths and weaknesses.

LEN: That's my point. I just wanted you to highlights the strengths rather than the weaknesses.

JOELLA: So did I. This film should be about promoting a wholesome image of our community. The idea being that an informed public will then want to buy our goods.

LEN: We are a charity not a soap opera.

NIGEL: Well, I can only assure you that the outtakes that I have viewed so far are highly favourable in terms of good PR for Samaritus.

LEN: So food fights in the dining room are good PR?

NIGEL: I didn't actually film that. The incident was merely mentioned in passing at the morning briefing.

LEN: You're right. I suppose that is something at least.

NIGEL: The only slightly negative undertone that is coming across is the opposition to Noel's recent appointment from some of The Lifers.

LEN: That's just laddish banter. I wouldn't take that too seriously.

NIGEL: I'm sure the viewers will take the criticisms of Noel in that light.

Pause.

NIGEL(cont'd): Incidentally, I was wondering where Niall is. I wanted to interview him in a 1-1 session.

LEN: Niall is currently on compassionate leave. He will be away for the rest of the week.

NIGEL: That's a pity. I suppose I can carry on with the other outstanding 1-1 interviews. And I appreciate the free rein you are giving me in making this film.

Pause.

NIGEL(cont'd): There was something else I wanted to mention.

Pause.

NIGEL(cont'd): I did see a large black rat walking down the corridor on Level 3 this morning.

LEN: Big bloody Drew!

JOELLA: Oh, Lord!

NIGEL: I hope I haven't spoken out of turn?

LEN: No, I'm glad that you have told me.

NIGEL: Will Drew be punished? The rat belongs to him, right?

LEN: Yes and yes. I'm afraid that he will be asked to leave the community. This is the last straw. He has been warned repeatedly about our no-pets policy.

NIGEL: I feel guilty about this.

LEN: Don't feel guilty. Health and Safety have been compromised and you have done the right thing in telling me of our rodent problem.

NIGEL: When will Drew be leaving?

LEN: Today. As soon as his bags are packed and his furry friends rounded up.

NIGEL: Will I be allowed to film Drew's departure?

LEN: I don't see why not. At least the public will see that Samaritus has certain basic rules that have to be followed.

NIGEL: Thank you.

Pause.

NIGEL(cont'd): Was there anything else?

LEN: Not that I can think of. I have to go and speak to Drew right away, so if you'll excuse me.

INT. Len rises from his chair and leaves the room, leaving Joella and Nigel behind.

JOELLA: You will try and be positive in your film, Nigel?

NIGEL: I will strive for neutrality and objectivity. It's the BBC way.

JOELLA: Thank you, Nigel. This film was my idea and I've got a lot riding on its success.

NIGEL: I know, Joella. Johnie told me.

INT. Len's Office. Joella leaves, followed by Nigel.

INT. 1-1 interview with Big Drew. Close up of Big Drew. Nigel is filming.

NIGEL: I see you have your bag packed, Drew.

BIG DREW: Yes. Len has barred me from the community. I'll be leaving in a few minutes.

NIGEL: Have you anywhere to go?

BIG DREW: I have a tent and sleeping bag. There are plenty of places round here where I can camp out.

NIGEL: And your rats?

BIG DREW: I have them all with me, except for two which managed to gnaw through their cage and escape.

INT. Drew opens his coat and reveals a black pet rat peeking from an inside pocket. Nigel films a close up of the rat.

NIGEL: What's he called?

BIG DREW: I call him Len. He's my favourite.

NIGEL: I know you love your rats but they have ended up costing you your home.

BIG DREW: They are like my children. Where I go, they go.

Pause.

BIG DREW(cont'd): Unlike people, animals never let you down.

NIGEL: So, no regrets Drew?

BIG DREW: None.

NIGEL: Thank you Drew. I think you have something to teach us all.

BIG DREW: I don't know about that. I just love my rats.

INT. Big Drew gets ready to leave. Nigel stops filming. Saul comes over to Big Drew.

SAUL: Drew, camp by The Tyre tonight. I'll make sure that you get fire

wood, food and drink for the coming days.

BIG DREW: Thanks Saul.

SAUL: No problem, Drew. Companions and ex-Companions alike are all brothers.

Pause.

SAUL(cont'd): Hang in there for the next week or so and I'll work on Len to let you back in the community.

BIG DREW: With my rats?

SAUL: We may have to find the rats a good home or, failing that, find a better hiding place for them in the community.

BIG DREW: As long as I can see them every day I will be happy.

SAUL: Leave it with me. I'll see what I can do. In the meantime you camp by The Tyre, and we'll make sure you have all that you need.

BIG DREW: Thanks, Saul. See you later.

SAUL: Yeah, see you later.

Pause.

SAUL: Have you got all your rats with you, Drew?

BIG DREW: Yes, Saul. I have them *all*.

SAUL: Thank fuck for that. Later, Drew.

EXT. A backpacking Big Drew walks away from the Samaritus buildings and is heading off in the direction of The Tyre. Saul departs in the direction of the warehouse. Len approaches Drew from the main building. Drew stops and waits for Len.

LEN: Hey, Drew. Here's something for a bite to eat.

EXT: Len hands Drew a twenty pound note.

BIG DREW: Thanks, Len.

LEN: No problem, Drew. Look after yourself.

BIG DREW: I will, Len. Don't worry.

Pause.

EXT. Len starts walking back to the main Samaritus building. He pauses to watch Big Drew pull a rat from his coat. Big Drew whispers to his pet.

BIG DREW: We will eat tonight my baby.

EXT: Big Drew continues his walk in the direction of The Tyre. Len shakes his head in regret and heads back into the main Samaritus building.

INT. 1-1 interview between Samir and Nigel. Nigel is filming. Close up shot of Samir.

SAMIR: Hello my friend, how are you?

NIGEL: Very well, Samir. And you?

SAMIR: I am good, my friend.

NIGEL: You look extra specialy happy today.

SAMIR: Yes, I have winner in 3-35pm at Haydock Park. This makes me very happy.

NIGEL: You like to gamble?

SAMIR: Sometimes, my friend.

NIGEL: So, what do you think of Samaritus?

SAMIR: It is very good place for me *now*.

NIGEL: Now?

SAMIR: Yes, I wait for my papers, and then I go to join my cousin in New Jersey.

NIGEL: You want to live in America?

SAMIR: Yes, this is my big dream.

NIGEL: But here is okay for now?

SAMIR: For now, yes.

NIGEL: And you get on with the other Companions?

SAMIR: Most of the time. You have to remember that nothing upsets me my friend.

NIGEL: Not even when the other Companions criticize your cooking?

SAMIR: They do not appreciate good food.

NIGEL: How do you feel when your Sudanese cuisine is undervalued?

SAMIR: The British still think they are superior to everyone else.

Pause.

SAMIR: General Gordon was a British Imperialist and he died in Khartoum with a spear through his heart.

NIGEL: You feel the victim of racism here in Samaritus?

SAMIR: You may say that my friend but I do not get upset by anyone. Not even by pigs.

Pause.

SAMIR: I go to America. America is a new country. Britain is a thing of the past. I want to be a free man in a free country. This is my dream.

NIGEL: Good luck, Samir.

SAMIR: Thank you, my friend.

INT. The 1-1 interview between Nigel and Samir ends. Nigel switches off his camera.

EXT. 9am in the morning. It is the morning of Noel's HGV Skills Test. Zac is stood to the side of the Samaritus van as Noel conducts his preliminary checks on the van's tyres, break lights, oil level etc. Zac is filming Noel on a hand held video recorder. Noel is explaining to Zac what he is doing while he is doing it, and why he is performing each check. Zac is smoking a pipe, and puffing on it in a ruminative fashion. Nigel is filming Zac filming Noel. Other Companions are stood around the yard watching this piece of cinematic theatre as it unfolds. Zac speaks to Noel through clenched teeth, in order not to drop his pipe.

ZAC: Just remember to be yourself, mate. Pretend I'm not here and do the checks as you would normally do them.

NOEL: And pretend Nigel isn't filming as well?

ZAC: Zactly.

EXT. Back of the van. The shutter is up and the tail gate is down. Noel and The Professor are loading items of furniture and then, with the aid of the tailgate, securing them in the back of the van. Zac is filming this operation and Nigel is filming Zac filming the operation.

ZAC: Is that how you would secure a wardrobe normally, Noel?

NOEL: Yes.

ZAC: I see.

EXT: Shot of Zac scribbling a note down on his clipboarded assessment form. Noel continues to talk to Zac's camera.

NOEL: As you can see, we have secured all the items, which have been brought from the warehouse. Now we are ready to deliver these items to the public.

EXT: Zac nods encouragingly.

NOEL: OKay, Zac. We are now ready to leave the yard. If you could join me in the cab and The Professor will back us out of the yard.

ZAC: Good. I like that.

EXT. Zac gets into the van cabin with Noel. Zac is still clenching his pipe between his teeth while filming all Noel's actions. The Professor is stood behind the van and is waiting to direct the van out of the yard. Nigel is stood to one side filming the overall scene. Nigel will be following the van on its rounds in his car, which is parked nearby. Len will be driving the car while Nigel films the Samaritus van ahead.

INT. Van cabin. Noel has just sat down in the driver's seat, while Zac is sat next to Noel, on Noel's left. A giant dildo is lying on the dashboard. Noel

is unaware of its existence and is busy readying himself for the task of reversing the van. Zac notices the offensive marital aid straight away and starts to frown.

ZAC: Okay, Noel, the first question is, do you notice anything odd?

NOEL: No, why?

ZAC: So giant dildos are normally part of the van's equipment?

INT: Noel looks in horror at the offending phallic toy. He makes a grab for it and throws it out of the cab window and into the yard.

EXT. Yard area. The dildo lands near the feet of Porno Pete who inspects it, sniffs it, and secretes the object in his coat pocket.

INT. Van cabin. Noel and Zac are sat next to each other. Zac is filming Noel as he is speaking.

NOEL: Shit. I don't know how that got there.

ZAC: The dashboard of the vehicle must be kept clear at all times. I'm afraid that you have started with a cross.

INT. Van cab. Zac makes a cross on his clipboarded form. Noel blushes.

ZAC(cont'd): Okay, Noel, if you can reverse out.

EXT. The van starts to reverse out of the yard. The Professor is guiding the van out backwards in text book fashion. Several of the Companions are making obscene gestures and pulling silly faces at Noel, who is concentrating intensely. Porno Pete pulls the dildo from his coat and starts making upward thrusting movements with the phallus in the direction of Noel. There is much raucous laughter and jeering. Nigel continues to film the van as he climbs into the passenger seat of his car, with Len ready at the wheel. Len is shaking his head in disbelief at the

farcical sequence of events. The van reverses out of the Samaritus yard, turns round, and begins to move away, with The Professor now on board. Nigel's car follows in stately pursuit. Len is still shaking his head disconsolately, as he steers the Pursuit Car in the van's wake.

INT. Van cabin. Noel is driving with Zac and The Professor sat in the other two cabin seats. Zac is filming Noel as he commentates on the journey.

ZAC: Tell me what you see, Noel.

NOEL: Well, it's a 30mph zone, so I am observing the speed limit.

ZAC: Good.

NOEL: I can see Nigel's car in my reverse mirror. He is filming the van.

ZAC: Good. That's the kind of detail that I'm after.

NOEL: You are filming *me*.

ZAC: Pretend that I am not here.

NOEL: Okay. There is a woman on the left with a dog.

ZAC: Note that it is an extendable lead and the dog could suddenly run out. Keep going.

NOEL: There is the entrance to a school on the right. I am aware that children could run out.

ZAC: Good. You could have freewheeled down that slight hill, thus saving on petrol. You have to be conscious of the environment.

NOEL: I'm finding it hard enough to concentrate on my driving right now.

ZAC: I know. Try to relax and keep talking.

NOEL: We are coming to a junction.

ZAC: Have you spotted the motorized wheelchair approaching from your left?

NOEL: Yes.

ZAC: Then tell me, Noel. Just say what you see.

Pause.

NOEL: A motorized wheelchair is approaching from the left.

INT. Van cabin. Zac points to a road sign at the junction corner. It is a truck outline superimposed with vertical lines.

ZAC(cont'd): What does that sign mean?

NOEL: I don't know, Zac. I've been driving for 18 years and some of the signs are new.

ZAC: You need to find out what the new signs mean.

INT. Van cabin. Zac makes another cross on the clipboarded assessment form.

EXT. The van proceeds on its journey with Nigel's car following. The motorized wheelchair driver has to make an emergency stop as Len hurriedly pulls out at the junction, determined not to let the van get too far ahead.

INT. Van cabin.

NOEL: We are now in a 40mph speed zone so I am smoothly accelerating.

ZAC: Good.

NOEL: There are some workmen up on the right in high visibility jackets.

Pause.

NOEL: On the left, coming up, is a bin truck.

ZAC: Yes, very good. Bin men are notorious for walking round the side of their truck without looking.

NOEL: I'm pulling out round the bin truck.

ZAC: I notice that you didn't indicate when you changed your driving line then.

NOEL: I didn't think that you indicated when pulling out round a stationary vehicle.

ZAC: You have to indicate when veering off your driving line. There could be a motorcyclist behind you. Without indicating he may plow into the back of the van.

THE PROFESSOR: Or in this case, a BBC camera man may rear end us.

ZAC: Very droll, Professor.

THE PROFESSOR: I'm just glad that I didn't mention the perils of low flying aircraft in this area.

INT. Zac sighs and writes a comment on his clipboarded assessment form.

ZAC: So, we are on our way to our first delivery.

NOEL: Yes, it's a two seater sofa, being delivered to a house in Diggle. It's in the back. I checked it is the right sofa with Marley before we left.

INT. The Professor shakes his head and is frowning to himself.

ZAC: Excellent. There needs to be first rate communication between van crew and warehousing personnel at all times.

EXT. The van pulls up outside a house in Diggle. Len pulls up in Nigel's car, behind the van. Nigel gets out of the car and continues to film Noel, The Professor and Zac. Zac is filming Noel. Noel is approaching the house and knocks on the door. The Professor has opened the back shutters of the van and is taking down the tailgate. Noel double checks the details of the delivery on the docket which he has in his hand.

NOEL: I'm knocking on the door of the customer to let him know we have arrived. It's a Mister Caroli.

EXT: The door opens and *Mister Caroli* stands in the doorway. Noel addresses him. Zac is stood behind Noel and filming the encounter. Nigel is stood behind Zac filming Zac and Noel and *Mr Caroli*. Len is stood in the background watching Nigel film Zac, who is filming Noel and *Mr Caroli*.

NOEL: Hello, Mr Caroli?

MAN IN DOORWAY: No. Mr Caroli lives next door.

NOEL: I'm sorry, sir.

EXT. An embarrassed looking Noel backs down the pathway and enters the correct pathway for Mr Caroli. He walks up to Mr Caroli's door and rings the bell. The real Mr Caroli answers the door.

NOEL: Ah, Mr Caroli, I presume?

MR CAROLI: Yes, that's me.

NOEL: We have a delivery for you from Samaritus. A two seater sofa.

MR CAROLI: Yes. I am expecting a two seater sofa.

NOEL: In case you are wondering why I am being filmed, this is my college lecturer, Zac, and the film is part of my HGV Skills test

assessment. Do you mind being filmed?

MR CAROLI: No objection, no.

Pause.

MR CAROLI(cont'd): Who's that guy filming over there?

NOEL: Oh, he's a BBC documentary film maker. He's making a film on Samaritus. Do you mind him filming you being filmed?

MR CAROLI: As long as I get my sofa I'm not bothered who is filming who. There's even a Neighbourhood Watch camera on that lamp post over there, filming your college man, and the BBC!

NOEL: Sign of the times, I guess.

EXT. Noel nods to Mr Caroli and turns to walk back to the van. Zac follows Noel, filming as he goes. Nigel is filming the scene in its entirety from a distance of 10 yards away. Noel is talking to Zac.

NOEL: As you can see, we have established that this is the correct address and confirmed the nature of the delivery. In this case it is a two seater sofa.

EXT. The Professor has moved the sofa on to the tail gate and brought the tail gate down to ground level. Noel and The Professor take each end of the sofa and lift the sofa off the ground. Noel addresses Zac. Nigel is filming the movement of the sofa with Zac in the foreground filming the same operation.

NOEL: As you can see we are using the correct lifting technique with straight backs and bent knees.

ZAC: Good.

NOEL: We are now walking down Mr Caroli's pathway taking care not to

trip on any steps and protruding surfaces.

EXT. Noel and The Professor are carrying the sofa and approaching the real Mr Caroli's doorway. Zac is following and filming their progress. Nigel is following Zac and filming everyone's progress. Mr Caroli's expression changes suddenly and he speaks to Noel.

MR CAROLI: That's not the sofa that I ordered!

NOEL: Are you sure?

MR CAROLI: Yes, I ordered a brown leather two seater and this one is red fabric.

THE PROFESSOR: Marley!

NOEL: Fucking Marley!

ZAC: Swearing in front of the customers is very unprofessional.

NOEL: Yes, you are right. I am sorry for the mix up Mr Caroli. Of course we will go back to Samaritus and rectify the error. Will you be in all day?

MR CAROLI: Yes, I will. Do you think you can deliver the correct sofa next time?

NOEL: Yes, sir. You have my guarantee.

EXT. Mr Caroli slams his door. Noel and The Professor are left standing in his pathway, holding the erroneous red sofa. Zac continues filming Noel and The Professor, while Nigel also continues filming the *mise-en-scene*. Len is holding his head in his hands.

NOEL: Okay. So, now we are loading the wrong sofa back on to the van.

EXT. Mr Caroli's pathway. Noel and The Professor struggle with the sofa back towards the van. They load the sofa, secure it in the back, and then

the van crew with Zac filming, get back in the van cabin. Nigel, without stopping filming gets back in the passenger side of his car. Len is already belted up in the driver's seat and reversing the car back on to the main road.

INT. Van cabin. Noel is driving back to Samaritus. Zac is filming Noel. The Professor is sat next to Zac. Len is following the van in Nigel's car. Nigel is hanging out of the passenger window and filming the van.

ZAC: Now can you see the need for communication? Communication, communication, communication. It's the secret to any successful business.

THE PROFESSOR: Even in the face of deliberate sabotage?

ZAC: Are you implying that the wrong sofa was deliberately loaded?

THE PROFESSOR: Zactly.

ZAC: Is that what you think, Noel?

NOEL: It looks that way.

ZAC: But did you double check that the correct sofa had been loaded before leaving the yard this morning?

NOEL: No. I took the word of a warehouse worker.

ZAC: That's where you went wrong, Noel. You always need to double check. That's the essence of good communication.

THE PROFESSOR: God, you are a self righteous prick. And you can keep that in your film.

ZAC: I beg your pardon.

THE PROFESSOR: You are a jumped up little health and safety jobsworth.

Pause.

THE PROFESSOR(cont'd): Little men like you are a menace. You've turned a competent experienced driver, like Noel, into a bumbling rookie by making him second guess and question his every action, which are normally performed smoothly and automatically.

NOEL: it's okay, Professor. I can defend myself.

ZAC: So, you think Health and Safety are a waste of time, Professor?

THE PROFESSOR: In the case of the tosh that you are disseminating, YES!

INT. Van cabin. Zac is continuing to film the verbal interaction in the cabin.

ZAC: Let me tell you an anecdote, and then I'll ask you again if you think Health and Safety is still a waste of time.

THE PROFESSOR: Is this Johari's Window again?

ZAC: No, mate. This story is from the heart.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): Let me take you back through the mists of time to 1980. It is a time of New Wave music, and Mrs Thatcher has been in power for a year. These facts are not germane to the story but I throw those details in for your delectation, and to set the tone.

Pause.

INT. Van cabin. Zac makes a theatrical gesture of turning the video camera off. He continues with his tale.

ZAC(cont'd): In 1980, a van driver was going about his daily business, just like any other day.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): He had made his usual deliveries and was finishing off the day with his final job.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): Reversing out of a lumber yard, where he had just dropped off some pallets, he didn't check his left sided rear view mirror.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): if he had, he would have noticed the young YTS trainee who, unbeknown to the van driver, was walking behind the 6 tonner.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): The young lad was crushed by the van's back wheels and, two days later, died in Intensive Care.

Pause.

INT. Van cabin. Zac has paused his story to wipe a tear from his eye.

ZAC(cont'd): That van driver was me and I have had to live with my negligence ever since. And it ain't pretty, mate.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): So, I'll ask you again, do you think Health and Safety are pointless?

NOEL: Of course not, Zac.

Pause.

THE PROFESSOR: is that why you have devoted your life to Health and Safety since the accident?

ZAC; Yes, mate. That is why.

INT. Van cabin. There is an awkward silence.

ZAC(cont'd): Ha ha. I had you going there, didn't I. Ha ha ha.

INT. Noel and The Professor are shaking their heads in disbelief.

ZAC(cont'd): I will give you one factual piece of information though.

Pause.

ZAC(cont'd): You losers can go and get stuffed! I'm off to South Africa next week, to sell elite cheese to a select clientele in The Cape area.

INT. Van cabin. The Professor is smiling to himself. Noel just looks bewildered. Zac is puffing on his pipe. He picks up his camera again and switches it on.

ZAC(cont'd): So, describe to me what you see, Noel.

NOEL: There's an old aged pensioner on the right with shopping bags.

ZAC: And he could walk into the oncoming traffic without thinking. Old people can be absent minded.

INT. Van cabin. Shot fades.

INT. Nigel's car. Len is driving. Nigel has stopped filming the van in front.

NIGEL: No point filming anymore. This trip back to Samaritus is proving uneventful. Shot fades.

INT. 1-1 interview between Sheila and Nigel. Nigel is filming. Close up of Sheila.

SHEILA: I know what you are thinking. Sheila the blonde bimbo secretary.

NIGEL: I wasn't thinking that at all.

SHEILA: Well, I wouldn't blame you. Sometimes it's easier to conform to that stereotype. There are times when fluttering my eyelids can get things done more quickly.

Pause.

SHEILA(cont'd): I was almost tempted to begin this interview with the line, " working *under* Len has given me great pleasure for several years now".

NIGEL: But you resisted that urge!

SHEILA: Yes, I did you naughty man. You see how easy it is to slip into that character.

NIGEL: I do now.

SHEILA: The Companions think that I am merely Len's bit of stuff.

Pause.

SHEILA: It's true that I am Len's girlfriend, but we are both adults and the relationship doesn't interfere with our professional duties in the community.

Pause.

SHEILA(cont'd): I am a qualified accountant and look after the books, as well as performing general administrative tasks.

NIGEL: Impressive.

SHEILA: My accounting background is not something that I advertise.

Pause.

SHEILA: I've seen lots of people come and go in this place, but Samaritus always manages to raise money for other charities and provide homes for formerly homeless men and women, though we tend to just take men.

NIGEL: Yes, why is that?

SHEILA: I'm not exactly sure. We have had the occasional female Companion in the past but we usually get men.

NIGEL: Perhaps men fall further?

SHEILA: Perhaps.

Pause.

SHEILA(cont'd): Maybe women are stronger and don't hit the bottle when a marriage breaks up or a job is lost?

NIGEL: That sounds a plausible explanation.

SHEILA: I do know that we have too much testosterone in the community. We need more women staff and Companions.

Pause.

SHEILA(cont'd): The Companions tend to be competitive and overly protective of their perceived domains in the community. There is constant in-fighting between the van crew and the warehouse team, for example.

NIGEL: I have noticed certain tensions in the community.

SHEILA: Territoriality combined with fragile male egos is a recipe for under-performance.

NIGEL: Can I quote you?

SHEILA: Certainly, Nigel. I quite like that maxim myself.

Pause.

SHEILA(cont'd): The trap one has to avoid in Samaritus is the paranoid mindset. It is very easy to start thinking that people are out to get you.

NIGEL: Like Noel?

SHEILA: I think there are some Companions who would like to see Noel leave. To be honest, I am surprized that Noel has lasted this long, but good luck to him. He has more spunk than I thought.

NIGEL: Are you reverting to your bimbo persona with that last comment?

SHEILA: Ha ha. No. Let's just say that Noel has spirit, shall we?

Pause.

SHEILA: Notwithstanding Noel's situation, I do not believe that there are organized conspiracies to undermine individuals or the community as a whole.

Pause.

SHEILA(cont'd): The mistakes and examples of under-performance are usually the result of apathy or human error. We are not dealing with a normal workforce here. There are some emotionally damaged people living in Samaritus who perhaps wouldn't be able to survive out there in the big world.

NIGEL: So, you make certain allowances?

SHEILA: Yes, we do. As long as the community muddles through, and we have enough money to pay the bills, we turn a blind eye to certain character defects in our resident population.

NIGEL: How do you see your future with Samaritus?

SHEILA: Well, I've been trying to get Len to retire so we can go and live in Spain. I have plenty of my own money and Len could sell his house. Together we'd have enough to live on.

NIGEL: Is Len considering retirement as an option?

SHEILA: I believe that he is coming round to that way of thinking. His health isn't great and this job is very stressful at times.

Pause.

SHEILA(cont'd): This business with the rat infestation is keeping him up at nights. It looks like we may have to close the community down until the problem is resolved. That would involve a loss of income and place a strain on the community's finances.

NIGEL: It's that serious?

SHEILA: Yes it is. But Samaritus always pulls through whatever the problem we are faced with. The roof collapsed one year but we coped. All the Companions rallied and the repairs were carried out. The shop was only closed for a few days.

NIGEL: it sounds like the Companions are a source of strength in a crisis.

SHEILA: When the chips are down, they pull together and come through. Certain members of the public think that the Companions are useless no-hopers, but that's not the full story. Some of the Companions are extremely determined individuals who have a stake in the continued existence of this community.

NIGEL: I'm beginning to get a sense of that strength.

SHEILA: If you stay here long enough then you will see it first hand.

Pause.

NIGEL: Thank you for your time, Sheila.

SHEILA: Thank you, Nigel.

INT. Nigel switches off his camera. Sheila rises from her chair and jiggles her boobs in an exaggerated sexy way. She laughs. Nigel laughs. Sheila leaves the room. Nigel shakes his head and smiles to himself.

INT. 1-1 interview between Porno Pete and Nigel. Nigel is filming. Close up shot of Porno Pete.

NIGEL: How long have you been a Companion, Pete?

PORNO PETE: 8 years.

NIGEL: So, you are settled here?

PORNO PETE: I suppose so.

NIGEL: Suppose?

PORNO PETE: Well, in an ideal world I would be living in California or Amsterdam.

NIGEL: Interesting locations.

PORNO PETE: Yep. The centres of *the* film industry.

NIGEL: I see.

PORNO PETE: Look, I know what you are driving at and I'm pleading not guilty.

Pause.

PORNO PETE: My recreational interests are well documented and strictly

legal.

NIGEL: I'm sure they are, Pete.

PORNO PETE: I've thought about leaving Samaritus many times. But, unless you have a job and somewhere to live then what's the point in needlessly speculating about a move.

NIGEL: The classic Catch 22?

PORNO PETE: Yep. You need a place to get a job, but need a job to get a place.

NIGEL: I accept your logic, but isn't it a recipe for inertia? You'll never take the plunge and therefore just remain at Samaritus *ad infinitum*?

PORNO PETE: I suppose you are right.

Pause.

PORNO PETE: Do you think Noel wants his dildo back?

INT. Cafe area. Morning meeting of Companions and Staff. Len is in the chair. Nigel is filming.

LEN: Good morning everybody.

Silence.

LEN(cont'd): The main item on the agenda today is the rat infestation in the community.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): By the way, where is Big Drew living at the moment?

SAUL: He's camping at The Tyre.

LEN: Good for him, though it's a pity he didn't take *all* of his rodent friends with him.

Silence.

LEN: *Pest Kill* are coming in today, so the community will be closed for the rest of the week, or until our rat problem is sorted out.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): But the closure is not going to be a free holiday for everybody.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd) The yard requires cleaning, and there is a lot of painting work that needs to be done around the main building. So people will be assigned their various tasks.

Silence.

LEN(cont'd): We are all present today with the exception of Niall, who remains on *compassionate* leave.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): I also have a couple of sad announcements to make.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): The Professor will be leaving us at the end of the week.

SAUL: Thank fuck for that.

LEN: Remarks like that do you no credit, Saul.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): I'm sure we all wish The Professor the best of luck with his future. Where is it that you are going, Professor?

THE PROFESSOR: I thought I'd travel around France for a while.

LEN: Well, good luck to you, and you go with *most* of our best wishes!

THE PROFESSOR: Thank you Len, and to my friends here. *Au revoir*.

Pause.

LEN: Also, Zac Keresh has decided to seek pastures anew overseas.

MARLEY: He's gone to flog cheese in South Africa!

LEN: Be that as it may. He goes with our blessing.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Tameside College will therefore be looking for a replacement tutor for the NVQ 2 Warehousing Skills Course. As soon as a substitute teacher is appointed then the NVQ 2 course will resume at Samaritus.

Pause.

LEN: Okay, that's all I wanted to say. The shop is closed until further notice.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Noel, can you do the shopping run this morning and take the Sprinter van?

NOEL: Yes, Len.

LEN: Saul, can you give Noel a hand with the shopping?

SAUL: Do I have a choice?

LEN: No.

SAUL: In that case the answer is yes.

LEN: Okay with you, Noel?

NOEL: Fine by me, Len.

LEN: Right, the meeting is over, unless there are any questions?

Silence.

LEN(cont'd): Let's get over this present problem with the rats and make sure that Samaritus continues to prosper.

INT. Cafe area. The meeting breaks up and the Staff and Companions start to leave the room. Nigel stops filming.

INT. Van cabin. Noel is in the driving seat. Saul is in the passenger seat by the window.

NOEL: What is it we are shopping for?

SAUL: I've got the list in my pocket. Just things that we have run short on like bread and milk.

NOEL: I notice that you weren't that keen on running this errand?

SAUL: I don't like you, mate.

NOEL: That's a shame. It will mean crossing you off my X-Mas Card List.

SAUL: You were never on mine.

Pause.

NOEL: Anyway, I'm glad we are alone at last. It's a good time for a little

chat.

SAUL: Pull over for a man to man chat if you want?

NOEL: It may well come to that but first let's set the record straight.

SAUL: Go on then, college boy.

NOEL: Look, I know that you have been trying to sabotage my work efforts from Day 1.

SAUL: You are paranoid.

NOEL: I don't think so.

SAUL: Grow up, boy.

NOEL: You really are an obnoxious little man.

Pause.

NOEL(cont'd): The thing is, Saul, that you are a big fish in a very small pond. You are nothing in the grand scheme of things.

SAUL: Go fuck yourself, you overgrown schoolboy.

INT. Van cabin. There is scratching noise coming from the glove compartment.

NOEL: What's that noise?

INT: Saul reaches for the glove compartment. A rat jumps out of the compartment. Commotion ensues. Noel loses control of the van as the rat jumps about the cabin. The van swerves and hits something. The lights go out.

INT. Van cabin. The cabin is partially caved in. The van has hit a tree by the side of the road. Saul is unconscious in the passenger seat. Noel has

been temporarily knocked out. Noel comes to and quickly assesses the seriousness of the situation. Fuel is leaking into the cabin. The smell is overpowering and there is a danger that the van will catch fire and explode. Noel begins to drag Saul's inert body from the cab via the driver's door. Noel pulls Saul from the wreckage and the two men collapse by the roadside. The van catches fire and explodes in the background. Shot fades.

INT. Hospital ward. Noel is sat up in a bed. He looks bruised but has clearly survived the crash. Saul is awake in the next bed. He has a cast on his leg but otherwise looks in rude good health. Len enters carrying grapes and Lucozade.

LEN: Noel, Saul. How are you both feeling?

SAUL: That's a silly bloody question.

LEN: Yes, I suppose it is.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): How are you feeling in the circumstances?

SAUL: Alive, thanks to Noel. He's a ruddy hero. I owe him my life.

NOEL: It was nothing, Saul. You would have done the same for me.

SAUL: I would now but I'm not sure I would have done at the time of the crash.

NOEL: We all have hidden resources. I think that you are being too hard on yourself.

SAUL: That's as may be but...

LEN: Look, you are both here, thank God. Let's count our blessings.

SAUL: Yes, you are right for once, Len.

INT. Saul sits up on his bed and, swinging his body round, lowers himself into a wheelchair.

SAUL(cont'd): Right, I'm going to the shop. You two can gossip away like a couple of old women. Noel, can I get you anything?

NOEL: No thanks, Saul.

INT: Saul nods his head and wheels himself off the ward.

LEN: You appear to have made a new friend.

NOEL: Yes. Some good has come from the accident.

LEN: I just want to say that you can take as long as you want before coming back to work.

NOEL: I should be back soon. The doctors are just keeping me in for observation.

Pause.

NOEL(cont'd): What about the van?

LEN: A write off but it's all covered by the insurance. We take delivery of a new van next week.

NOEL: What about the rats?

LEN: We've got rid of hundreds of the buggers but there are still a few living in the piping system and service conduits.

NOEL: So the shop is still closed?

LEN: For now but *Pest Kill* are confident that the problem will be solved within the week. Poison and traps have been laid everywhere.

NOEL: I hope they are right.

LEN: So do I, lad. So do I.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): There's something else I wanted to talk about.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): I am going to retire. Me and Sheila are moving over to Torremolinos.

NOEL: That's great news, you lucky old devil.

LEN: I think so too.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): The thing is, I've nominated you as my successor. I want you to be Samaritus Manager.

NOEL: But...

LEN: Listen, you will be ideal for the job. You know how the place works and, being the local hero, now have the respect of the Companions.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Just think about it. The job is your's if you want it. I've already spoken to the Trustees and they back your nomination.

INT. The Professor enters the ward. Len gets up to leave.

LEN: Hello, Professor. Come to see the hero before you leave?

THE PROFESSOR: Heroes are rare these days. I wanted to see a live one in the flesh.

LEN: Right, I'll let you two have a chat. Think about what I have said, Noel.

NOEL: I will, Len, and thanks.

INT: Len leaves the ward. The Professor sits down in the vacant chair left by Len.

THE PROFESSOR: Where's your room mate?

NOEL: Saul? Oh, he's gone to the hospital shop. He won't be back for another five minutes or so.

THE PROFESSOR: Good. So how are you feeling?

NOEL: Fine. I'll be out in a couple of days. No lasting damage.

THE PROFESSOR: And you saved Saul's life, I hear?

NOEL: It was nothing. I acted without thinking.

THE PROFESSOR: You are too modest.

Pause.

THE PROFESSOR(cont'd): You said that you joined Samaritus to be a good man. I think that you have achieved your goal. Saving human lives is as *good* as it gets.

Silence.

THE PROFESSOR(cont'd): Look, I'm here to say goodbye and wish you well. You seemed to have turned a corner with the other Companions and I don't think that you will have any more problems with them. You have survived the test.

Pause.

THE PROFESSOR(cont'd): It's time for me to move on now.

NOEL: Where will you go, France?

THE PROFESSOR: Yes, for starters. I've lived there before and speak passable French.

NOEL: What about money?

THE PROFESSOR: I have enough. They have Samaritus communities in France too, if I get desperate!

NOEL: Keep in touch, will you?

THE PROFESSOR: I'll send you a post card.

INT. The Professor walks over to Noel's bed and shakes his hand.

THE PROFESSOR(cont'd): Farewell, *mon brave*.

NOEL: Take care of yourself, Professor.

THE PROFESSOR: I will.

INT: The Professor leaves the ward. As he does so Saul re-enters in his wheelchair.

SAUL: What did he want?

NOEL: He was just saying goodbye.

SAUL: In a strange way I'll miss the educated twat.

NOEL: That *is* progress.

INT. The ward. Noel and Saul look at each other and then both start laughing. Shot fades.

INT. Service tunnel in the roof of the Samaritus building. A rat is skillfully

weaving its way around rat traps, ignoring the poisoned bait on offer. It stops to sniff at an electrical cable and starts to chew on it. Sparks start to fly and the rat scuttles away, but a small fire starts. The fire begins to spread.

INT. The corridors in the Samaritus living quarters are filling with smoke. The fire alarm is going off. It is 3am. Sleepy eyed Companions are exiting their rooms in dressing gowns and shorts and hastily making for the Fire Exits.

EXT. Car park area. All the Companions and Staff are stood watching the Samaritus building go up in flames. Sirens of approaching Fire Tenders can be heard in the background.

EXT. The Tyre. Big Drew has emerged from his tent holding two of his pet rats. Together they watch the Samaritus inferno in the distance.

EXT. Car park area. Staff are checking off names and counting heads. The dumbfounded Companions are watching the blaze.

LEN: Is everyone out, Sheila?

SHEILA: Yes, all accounted for.

Pause.

SHEILA: Bloody hell, love.

LEN: I know. At least we are all safe.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Can you phone around the local hotels and see if they will take the Companions for a few days?

SHEILA: Will do, love.

LEN: At least we've solved the rat problem!

Silence.

EXT. A sooty faced Len is staring at the inferno. A tear is rolling down his cheek. Shot fades.

EXT. The next morning. The dawn is breaking. The last of the fire engines is pulling away. Len is still stood in front of the wrecked building. Len is alone. All that remains before him is a pile of charred, smouldering debris.

EXT. The newly rebuilt Samaritus building on the old site. Superimpose caption, "One Year Later". Len is stood in the same place as he was a year earlier, when he stood before the charred wreckage of the old building. A crowd has gathered behind him, consisting of Companions, Staff, Trustees, and local dignitaries. A ribbon is draped across the entrance door. Len steps forward with a large pair of scissors. Before cutting the ribbon he turns to face the crowd. Nigel is filming the action.

LEN: Today is a momentous day!

EXT: Cheers from the crowd.

LEN(cont'd): Today is one year on from the fire that destroyed the old Samaritus.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): But the Phoenix has risen from the ashes!

EXT. Cheers from the crowd. Len raises his hand for quiet.

LEN(cont'd): Today signals the start of a new era.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): I believe that the new Samaritus will be better and more successful than the old.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Mistakes were made in the past but we have learned from those mistakes. Is that not the story of life, that we err from the true path but emerge stronger and with a clearer picture of where we are heading.

Pause.

LEN(Cont'd): I for one know where I am heading.

Pause.

LEN(cont'd): Torremolinos!

EXT: Cheers and laughter from the crowd.

LEN(cont'd): Seriously, I am retiring and heading off to sunny Spain with my partner Sheila, but not before I hand over the reins to my new successor, Noel.

EXT. Cheers from the crowd. Noel, in their midst, acknowledges the applause. Sheila smiles.

LEN(cont'd): I am leaving Samaritus in capable hands. I know all the Companions will give him their total support.

SAUL: Here, here!

LEN: I'd like to thank everyone who has worked tirelessly over the last 12 months, providing their time, effort and resources to the rebuilding of this community. Thank you all. You know who you are.

EXT: Cheers from the crowd.

LEN(cont'd): And so without further ado, I pronounce the all new Samaritus duly open.

EXT. Len steps forward and cut the ribbon over the door. The crowd cheers. Nigel is capturing the moment on film.

INT. Noel's office. Noel is sat behind a desk. Nigel is sat facing him with camera in hand and switched on. It is a 1-1 interview.

NIGEL: Noel, it's a year since we last spoke, and in that time there have been quite a few changes.

NOEL: Yes. We have a new building and several of the Companions and Staff have moved on.

NIGEL: I also sense that on a personal level you have a better rapport with some of the Companions.

NOEL: That's probably true.

NIGEL: And do you think the van crash had anything to do with that change in attitude towards you?

NOEL: Possibly. It's not really for me to say.

NIGEL: Well that seems to be the public's perception after the first series of Samaritus was screened. One year on, this interview will form part of a one-off follow up episode. The public have been clamouring to know how Samaritus has rebuilt itself in the wake of the fire.

NOEL: Well, the answer to that question is, very successfully.

Pause.

NIGEL: We know that you have taken over from Len, and Sheila. For the benefit of the viewer, could you tell us about the other people who left Samaritus in the last year.

NOEL: Well, The Professor left shortly after the crash. He went to France. We did receive a post card about a month after his departure, post marked Marseilles. I hope he is well.

Pause.

NOEL(cont'd): Big Drew left while were filming but apparently has secured himself a job working in a Pet Shop in Stalybridge.

Pause.

NOEL(cont'd): Samir is currently living in New Jersey.

NIGEL: So, he made it to America?

NOEL: Yes, he did. His papers finally came through from Khartoum.

INT. Noel reaches in a desk drawer and pulls out a postcard. He shows it to Nigel. Close up shot of the post card. It is a picture of a smiling Samir wearing a cowboy hat.

NIGEL: I didn't realize that they had cowboys in New Jersey.

NOEL: I don't think they do. Samir must be the only one.

Pause.

NOEL(cont'd): He says he's well and working in his cousin's kebab shop. Good luck to him.

Pause.

NOEL(cont'd): We also got a post card from Amsterdam where Porno Pete is currently residing. I'd show you the card but it's probably a bit graphic for your viewers.

NIGEL: Show me later, off camera?

NOEL: That might be for the best.

Pause.

NOEL(cont'd): Apparently Pete came into some inherited money.

NIGEL: And now he's living the dream?

NOEL: Yes. He and Samir are both living the dream.

NIGEL: And did you ever hear from Niall? He was very popular with our younger viewers.

NOEL: No, he never came back. His stuff is still in storage. Luckily the storage cellar escaped most of the fire damage. But, he's not come to collect it yet.

NIGEL: Strange how he just disappeared off the radar.

NOEL: Companions come and go all the time. Niall did talk often of moving down to London. We wish him well.

NIGEL: And the other Companions and Staff from a year ago?

NOEL: They are all still here with one or two new additions.

INT. 1-1 interview. Mick Bairstow and Nigel. Nigel is filming.

NIGEL: Hi Mick. One year on and how does it feel?

MICK BAIRSTOW: How does what feel?

NIGEL: Being a Companion in the new Samaritus?

MICK BAIRSTOW: It's all reet. I'd be doing my job in the warehouse now if you hadn't pulled me off it for this poncey interview.

NIGEL: I appreciate your time, Mick.

MICK BAIRSTOW: Mr Bairstow to you.

NIGEL: I appreciate your time, Mr Bairstow.

MICK BAIRSTOW: Get on with it then. Time is brass as they say round my way.

NIGEL: What do you think of Noel, the new Community Manager?

MICK BAIRSTOW: He seems competent enough. The jury is still out.

Pause.

MICK BAIRSTOW(cont'd): As long as he doesn't start changing everything for the sake of it, and let's us Companions run the place.

NIGEL: So, you're happy with the status quo?

MICK BAIRSTOW: They are a bloody good rock band.

NIGEL: I think you know what I mean, Mick.

MICK BAIRSTOW: Mr Bairstow. I won't tell you again.

NIGEL: You won't have to Mr Bairstow. Thanks for your time.

MICK BAIRSTOW: Can I bloody go now?

NIGEL: Yes. Thanks again.

INT. Mick Bairstow leaves the room. Nigel stops filming. Nigel smiles to himself. Shot fades.

INT. 1-1 interview between Nigel and Marley. Nigel is filming.

NIGEL: Hello, Marley. How's your life going?

MARLEY: Okay, man.

NIGEL: What do you think of the new Samaritus?

MARLEY: It's like the old one. Just the same.

NIGEL: And Noel as Manager?

MARLEY: He's a hero, man, saving Saul from the flames.

NIGEL: So you like Noel now?

MARLEY: I always liked him, man.

NIGEL: Really?

MARLEY: Yeah, man. You check your tapes. The evidence is right there.

Pause.

MARLEY(cont'd): This place is about community and working together, man.

NIGEL: So you have no problem with the new leadership?

MARLEY: No way, man. Noel ain't no Babylon.

NIGEL: Thank you for your time, Marley.

MARLEY: Peace brother. Rastafari.

INT. Marley saunters off. Nigel stops filming. Again, Nigel finds it hard to suppress a smile.

INT. Furniture Shop area. Joella and Saul are behind the counter. Joella is dealing with a customer while Saul is taking an order over the phone. The place is a beehive of activity. Joella finishes dealing with the customer and faces Nigel who is filming.

NIGEL: Hi Joella.

JOELLA: Hi Nigel.

NIGEL: You seem to be taking a much more hands on approach in the retail side of the business these days.

JOELLA: You think so?

Pause.

JOELLA(cont'd): I suppose the fire and the rebuild have given all of us time to reassess our respective roles in the community. Saul suggested that I take a more active role in the pricing of the furniture.

INT. Saul has finished his phone conversation and is facing Nigel.

SAUL: Yes, a lot has happened since the accident and the fire. I realized that I needed to involve Joella more in the day to day running of the shop. This is a team effort and I welcome her input.

NIGEL: It's almost like you have had a *Road to Damascus* conversion this last year.

SAUL: You think so? Well, I'll take that as a compliment.

NIGEL: it was meant as one.

SAUL: I think we need more female input in the community. I had a long chat with Sheila on this subject before she left. I think she is right.

JOELLA: Absolutely. Sheila is greatly missed. There is a lot more to Sheila than meets the eye.

NIGEL: I know.

JOELLA: Noel is even talking about employing a new female van driver.

NIGEL: There will be less road rage!

JOELLA: I agree.

INT. Furniture Shop counter. Another customer approaches Joella and the phone rings again. Saul answers the phone. Nigel carries on filming for a few seconds but then, with a raise of the hand as a sign of appreciation, moves on.

INT.1-1 interview between Zac and Nigel. Nigel is filming.

NIGEL: I believe that you are now a Companion, Zac?

ZAC: Yeah, mate.

NIGEL: South Africa didn't work out?

ZAC: Nah. It went tits up.

NIGEL: They didn't go for your elite cheese idea?

ZAC: What do you think? Afrikaans don't know their arse from their Edam.

NIGEL: How are you coping with your new lifestyle?

ZAC: It's bobbins, mate. But what can you do? The wife threw me out after we got deported from South Africa. I ended up sleeping in The Jag.

NIGEL: You've still got The Jag?

ZAC: No, mate, she got that in the settlement. I'm potless. Not a carrot to my name after the divorce.

NIGEL: So you think that you will be here long?

ZAC: Not if I can help it. I've got a few irons in the fire, mate. A few ideas.

NIGEL: You used to say that you were no better than the Companions. That you were just the same as them. Did you mean that?

ZAC: Right now it appears that I am no better than anyone else, but the wheels turn. You can't keep a good man down for long.

NIGEL: Any more money making ideas?

ZAC: One or two but I can't tell you. You'd steal my ideas and go off and make a killing, mate.

NIGEL: Where do you work in the community?

ZAC: Bric-a-Brac sort.

NIGEL: You have Samir's old job?

ZAC: Yeah, it's pretty cushdie, mate.

NIGEL: Good luck with Bric-a-Brac Sort.

ZAC: Thanks, mate, but I don't need luck. If you have big enough balls the world is your oyster.

INT. Nigel stops filming. Zac remains seated and appears deep in thought.

EXT. Samaritus building situated on top of Saddleworth Moor. The building is silhouetted against a slate grey sky. A large white box van is parked outside, with the logo "SAMARITUS" etched on the side of the van. Afternoon rain is starting to fall. Already lights are on in the building. Nigel's car slowly pulls away from Samaritus.

THE END.